



autumn 2021

andon

112



- > Hybridity in Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto
- > Understanding Wright's Organic Space: The Miegakure Effect
- > Echoes of Kuniyoshi in Yoshiiku's *Imayo nazorae Genji*
- > A work of Japanese calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum



ANASTASIA VON SEIBOLD
JAPANESE ART 日本美術

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849)

Rainstorm Beneath the Summit (*Sanka haku-u*), woodblock print from the series
Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji (*Fugaku sanjurokkei*), circa 1831
Horizontal *oban*: 25.4 × 37.6 cm. (10 × 14 3/4 in.)

4 Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JE, United Kingdom — social @avsjapaneseart
anastasia@avsjapaneseart.com — +44 (0) 7966 255 250

avsjapaneseart.com



EGENOLF
GALLERY

FINE JAPANESE PRINTS & DRAWINGS

ESTABLISHED 1975

WE SECURELY SHIP PRINTS
TO EUROPE EVERY WEEK

NEW ACQUISITIONS POSTED DAILY@
WWW.EGENOLFGALLERY.COM

VERONICA MILLER

PO BOX 4240

BURBANK CA 91503

661.821.0256 TEL

VERONICA@EGENOLFGALLERY.COM

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839-1892)
Oshichi Yaoya Ascending a Ladder After
Setting Fire to the Kanda District in Edo, 1885

IFPDA Member



Tsuji Kakō (1870-1931)

Kakō was one of the most important painters of the modern Kyoto school. Kōno Bairei (1844-1895) taught both him and Takeuchi Seihō (1864-1942), who eclipsed Kakō during his lifetime. In my opinion though, Kakō was the better artist, more innovative and daring.

He was born in Kyoto. His father, a Yūzen textile artisan, encouraged him to pursue a career in painting. He became a pupil of Kōno Bairei (1844-95) in 1880 and from 1899 on he studied Zen meditation under the Zen master Sōen Mokurai (1854-1930) at the Kennin-ji. Zen became quite an important element in his work. He served as director of the Kyoto Municipal School of Fine Arts and Crafts, and was juror for the Teiten and several Kyoto exhibition groups. Up to 1920 Kakō was a frequent exhibitor and prizewinner at the Bunten.



Collecting chestnuts,
in the circle of the shade
of the tree.



Kiyomizu Rokubei V (1875-1959)

Rokubei V was the second son of Kiyomizu Rokubei IV. Like Kakō he studied Shijō painting with Kōno Barei and also at the Kyoto Prefectural School of Painting. After his graduation he studied ceramic techniques with his father and glazing techniques at the Kyoto Municipal Ceramic Laboratory. He worked on the research of new glazing techniques and Western designs.

When Rokubei IV retired in 1913, he inherited the title and became Rokubei V. He exhibited at the Nōten, the Design and Applied Artworks Exhibition sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce and at the Teiten. He also showed at the Imperial Art Academy Exhibition, of which he became a member. He played an important role in the craft world and was a leading figure and until his retirement in 1945.

▼ *Tsuji Kakō* - Morning clouds with crows
Signed and sealed: *Kakō* - c. 1915
Sumi and red on paper, 30.2 x 40.8. Green damask and green silk mounting, 186.5 x 32.4
Morning clouds with crows was a main theme in Kakō's work around 1915. The numbers of crows may differ but are always was a prime number.

▲ Together with *Kiyomizu Rokubei V*
Kawarake dish, sun-dried earthenware - *Kuri*, chestnuts
Signed: *Kakō saku* and potters' seal *Kiyo*
Orange and mica *kyōyaki* with an under glaze painting
Ø 21.5 x 3.3



ORANDA JIN Japanese paintings & painters' pottery

Jon & Senne de Jong

Kalverstraat 28, 5223 AD 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands

+31 73 621 89 51 / orandajin@home.nl / orandajin.com

Please visit our web gallery. We post updates every first week of the month.

See us at the PAN 2021 / November 14-21 / Booth 94

andon

112



Shedding light on Japanese art

Content

- 05 **The Poetry of Play: Hybridity in Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto**
Pauline Ayumi Ota
- 31 **The Japanese Print as a Lens to Understanding Wright's Organic Space: The Miegakure Effect**
Kenneth Dahlin
- 46 **His Master's Voice: Echoes of Kuniyoshi in Yoshiiku's Imayo nazorae Genji**
André Kraayenga
- 60 **An intriguing work of Japanese calligraphy from the former Felix Tikotin collection in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam**
Hori Sakiko
- 78 **Book Review**
Sixty Years with Japanese Prints by George Mann
John Fiorillo

In This Issue

Dear members,

Welcome to the second issue of Andon for the year 2021.

The first contribution of Andon 112 by Pauline Ayumi Ota examines the handscroll set *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto*, with paintings by Maruyama Ōkyo and inscriptions by Takahashi Munenao. Ota thoroughly investigates the hybridity of courtly traditions and more commonly embraced representations of life in Kyoto displayed in this scroll set. Kenneth Dahlin illustrates the significant role Japanese woodblock prints had on Frank Lloyd Wright's organic architecture. Dahlin explains the so-called *miegakure* effect by comparing Wright's design with Edo period landscape prints. André Kraayenga demonstrates how and to what extent the print artist Utagawa Yoshiiku copied and adapted visual sources from his teacher Kuniyoshi in his series *Imayo nazorae Genji*. The concluding article brings us insights into a calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Hori Sakiko uncovers new aspects about a calligraphic work from the former Tikotin collection and takes a closer look at how East Asian calligraphy was appreciated in Europe in the early 20th century. The book review by John Fiorillo discusses a new publication by the print collector George Mann, highlighting the history and treasures of his print collection.

We hope you will enjoy reading the new contributions. We wish you all the best for the remaining days of this year, and a happy and healthy 2022.

Andon Editorial Board

On the cover:

Maruyama Ōkyo and

Takahashi Munenao,

Detail of *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto* (see p. 8)





Andon, Shedding Light on Japanese Art

Andon, the journal of the Society for Japanese Art (SJA), provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information relating to Japanese art. Andon is published twice a year.

© Copyright 2021 the Society of Japanese Art, The Netherlands. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the Society. Every reasonable effort has been made to seek appropriate permission from authors or copyright holders for the material published in Andon. Copyright owners who consider their rights violated are requested to contact the Editor-in-Chief.

Editorial Board

Monika Hinkel, Editor-in-Chief
Aafke van Ewijk, Project Manager
Jim Dwinger
John Fiorillo
Manuela Moscatiello
Doreen Mueller
Rhiannon Paget
Beatrice Shoemaker

Advisory Board

Willem R. van Gulik
Henk J. Herwig
Robert Schaap

Design

Marga Kanters/Henri Ritzen
www.ritzen-design-consult.nl

Production

High Trade, Zwolle
(printed in Hungary)

ISSN 0168-2997

Correspondence

All correspondence regarding Andon should be addressed to the SJA:
andon@societyforjapaneseart.org
All address changes should be sent to the secretary of the SJA:
secretary@societyforjapaneseart.org
Inquiries about advertising can be sent to:
advertising@societyforjapaneseart.org

Contributors to Andon 112

Ken DAHLIN is a national award-winning architect, scholar and speaker specialising in organic architecture. He received his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's School of Architecture in 2018, successfully defending his dissertation, "The Aesthetics of Frank Lloyd Wright's Organic Architecture: Hegel, Japanese Art, and Modernism."

John FIORILLO is an independent researcher and writer on traditional and modern Japanese prints, with a special interest in Kamigata-e and sōsaku hanga (creative prints). He has published articles in Andon, contributed to the Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints (2005), and designed and written the websites ViewingJapanesePrints.net and OsakaPrints.com. He also serves as a member of the Andon editorial board.

Sakiko HORI is currently a lecturer of the language centre at the University of Stuttgart, member of The Japan Art History Society and the Society for Japanese Art. Her Master's thesis (2008, Hosei University) was on Laurence Binyon, Head of Oriental Art at the British Museum before the war. After dropping out of PhD course at Waseda University, she returned to her research activities focusing on *Vereeniging voor Japansche grafiek en kleinkunst* after a 10-year break.

André KRAAYENGA is a board member of the Society for Japanese Art and an avid collector of Japanese prints.

Pauline Ayumi OTA is an Associate Professor of Art & Art History (History of Japanese Art) at DePauw University (Greencastle, Indiana, USA). Her research focuses on representations of Kyoto in the latter half of the eighteenth century, as well as the art of Maruyama Ōkyo (1733-95) and the Maruyama-Shijō school.

Guidelines for Submission to Andon

Submissions to Andon are accepted year-round with articles submitted from 1 February to 1 July considered for the Winter issue and from 1 August to 1 January for the Spring issue. Articles should be no more than 5,000 words, with 10–15 illustrations. Reviews of books, catalogues or exhibitions should be no more than 700 words, with 3 illustrations, including a cover image. All submissions should be delivered in a digital format in accordance with Andon's house style (a stylesheet is available upon request). Submitted articles are subject to review before final acceptance; authors will receive three complimentary copies upon publication. Any enquiries regarding the submission of articles should be addressed to the SJA.

For further information, please visit our website at
www.societyforjapaneseart.org/andon



Society
for Japanese
Art

The Poetry of Play: Hybridity in *Amusements* *of the four seasons* *of Kyoto*

Pauline Ayumi Ota

With calligraphic inscriptions by Takahashi Munenao (1703–1785) and paintings by Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto* is a two-handscroll set commissioned by the courtly Kujō family as a gift for the Owari Tokugawa, kinsfolk of the ruling shogun. The work, therefore, is consistently read as praise for the Pax Tokugawa. This study further argues that *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto* also demonstrates a hybridity, juxtaposing the poetic impulses of the court with the tastes of the society at large.

Introduction

Collaborations often generate richly layered results. A case in point is the *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto* (*Karaku shiki yūgi zukan*, also known as *Shiki yūroku zukan*, hereafter *Amusements*, fig. 1), a two-handscroll set produced in the 1770s with calligraphic inscriptions by Takahashi Munenao (1703–1785) and paintings by Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795).¹ The enterprise also involved a third party, the Kujō family. Courtiers of the highest rank and the effective manager of the project, the Kujō commissioned and oversaw the production of *Amusements* as a gift for the lord of the Owari domain, who was a distant cousin of the ruling shogun.² In Kyoto, the employment of accomplished, but lower-ranking individuals, such as Ōkyo and Takahashi, by prominent warriors or the court had occurred in the past and became more prevalent in the 18th century.³ Indeed, Kyoto provided a fertile environment for such commissions to occur. The home of the emperor and the imperial court, as well as the headquarters of numerous Buddhist temples, and with high-ranking warriors maintaining residences there, pre-modern Kyoto boasted a wealth of scholars, artists, poets, and writers, who often worked for, and socialised with, not only each other but also the elite.⁴ Both the calligrapher Takahashi and the painter Ōkyo had completed projects for members of the imperial court prior to receiving the *Amusements* assignment. Nonetheless, this particular endeavour produced a poetic hybridity that reflects not only the skills of the painter and calligrapher but also the evolving interests of courtiers like the Kujō in the latter half of the 18th century.

Amusements measures 28.2 cm in height with the first scroll extending 616 cm in length and the second 561.2 cm. Executed on silk, each scroll presents a textual, followed by a pictorial, description of Kyoto in two seasons,

spring and summer in the first and autumn and winter in the second. The work is relatively well researched, particularly because of the renown of the painter, Maruyama Ōkyo — his signature and seal appear at the end of each of the two scrolls. Early 20th century scholarship on *Amusements* established the identity of the calligrapher and patron, the intended recipient of the commission, and the likely dates of completion.⁵ Further studies followed, including a transcription of Takahashi's calligraphically rendered prose.⁶ Interpretations of *Amusements* tend to focus on Ōkyo's paintings and read them as praise for the rule of the Tokugawa shoguns.⁷ Because the work was produced as a gift for the head of the Owari Tokugawa, a collateral but powerful branch of the Tokugawa family, this understanding of *Amusements* is hermeneutically sensible.

I aim, however, to complicate this reading. Building upon previously published research, this study offers a more balanced analysis of *Amusements*, one that approaches Takahashi Munenao's inscriptions as working harmoniously with Ōkyo's paintings. Considered holistically, *Amusements* both meets and defies expectations, demonstrating characteristics expected of a courtly tradition, as well as a similarity to more commonly embraced representations of life in Kyoto. Indeed, upon closer scrutiny, *Amusements* exhibits a charming, yet understated, hybridity. This paper contends that alongside the nod to effective Tokugawa governance, *Amusements* also successfully juxtaposes the poetic impulses of the court with the tastes of society at large, reflecting the expanding interests of courtiers such as the Kujō.

The Commission

Sometime in the late 1770s, the aristocratic Kujō family of Kyoto presented *Amusements* to the lord of the Owari domain, Tokugawa

Munechika (1733–1799).⁸ One of the Gosanke or the three noble (‘successor’) houses of the Tokugawa clan, from which a shogun would be selected should the main line fail to produce an heir, the Owari Tokugawa wielded a fair amount of wealth and influence.⁹ What may have prompted the Kujō to send the Owari Tokugawa such a gift? In 1778, Kujō Naozane (1717–1787), the head of the family, attained the highest imperial office of *kanpaku* or regent and retained the position until his death in 1787; it is possible that Naozane commissioned *Amusements* in anticipation of his ascension to the post.¹⁰ The Owari Tokugawa had voiced support of the emperor and the court since the end of the 17th century, so such a gesture was appropriate.¹¹ The Kujō would have considered the choice of gift with care, ultimately settling upon an illustrated handscroll representing not only the arts of the brush — painting, poetic text, and calligraphy — but also the flourishing city of Kyoto in which they lived. Accordingly, the acclaimed painter Maruyama Ōkyo and Emperor Gomomozono’s (1758–1779, r. 1770–1779) favoured calligrapher, Takahashi Munenao, were commissioned to execute what would become known as *Amusements*.¹² Both men were listed in the *Who’s who of Kyoto* (*Heian jinbutsu shi*) and had earned stellar reputations at court.¹³ Furthermore, the importance of the recipient ensured that Naozane would commit considerable funds and attention to *Amusements*’ planning and production.

The extant drafts, those in the collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (hereafter Met Museum), indicate that *Amusements* was devised with care and that the Kujō were scrupulous in their oversight of the project. Let us first consider the more detailed of the two, the Detroit draft (fig. 2), which documents the calligrapher, patron, and recipient of the work.¹⁴ *Amusements* itself only identifies the painter through Ōkyo’s

signatures and seals and is undated. The Detroit draft, executed as a single scroll on paper, is comprised of Ōkyo’s ink monochrome preparatory drawings and Takahashi’s inscriptions. Takahashi also added a poetic postscript proclaiming his authorship:

A most poor effort —
 ven my thoughts are unsteady.
 The brush of old age
 produces in confusion
 words, evanescent as dew.

[Takahashi] Munenao

Underlying the conventional expressions of humility, the phrasing suggests a sense of pride in the work completed, as well as a recognition of the futility of that pride.

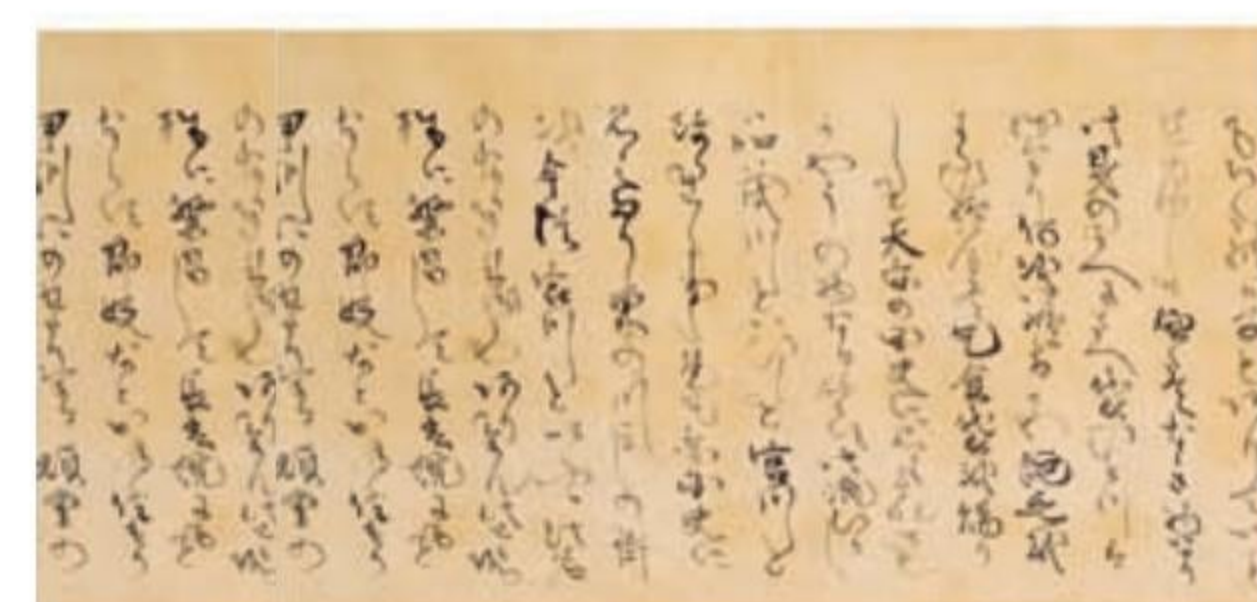
Three additional comments inscribed at the end of the draft indicate that at the time these postscripts were composed, the draft belonged to Tō Teikan (1732–1797), a Kyoto historian.¹⁵ The earliest of these postscripts, by Kō Fuyō (1722–1784), a painter, calligrapher, and seal carver is dated 1777. We can therefore assume that *Amusements* had been completed by that date, as the draft was no longer needed and in Teikan’s hands.¹⁶ Of the remaining postscripts, one was added in 1780 and two in 1786. The latter of the 1786 postscripts was inscribed by the poet and Confucian scholar Matsunaga Mitsuoki (1718–1795).¹⁷ In his remarks, Matsunaga describes the circumstances behind the commission of *Amusements*.

This single scroll is the draft by Minamoto Ōkyo of an awe-inspiring painting of the four seasons of the capital [Kyoto] that the Kujō presented as a gift to the Owari Tokugawa; this draft is in the treasured possession of the master of Mubutsusai (Tō Teikan). The Kujō’s patronage of Ōkyo came to

1.

Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao,
*Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*,
ca. late 1770s, ink and
colour on silk.

Tokugawa Art Museum Image
Archives/DNPartcom.



an end, though Ōkyo's paintings have a vividness and an unworldly power. The history of this scroll is rather unusual; elaboration on this topic would take many characters [words].¹⁸

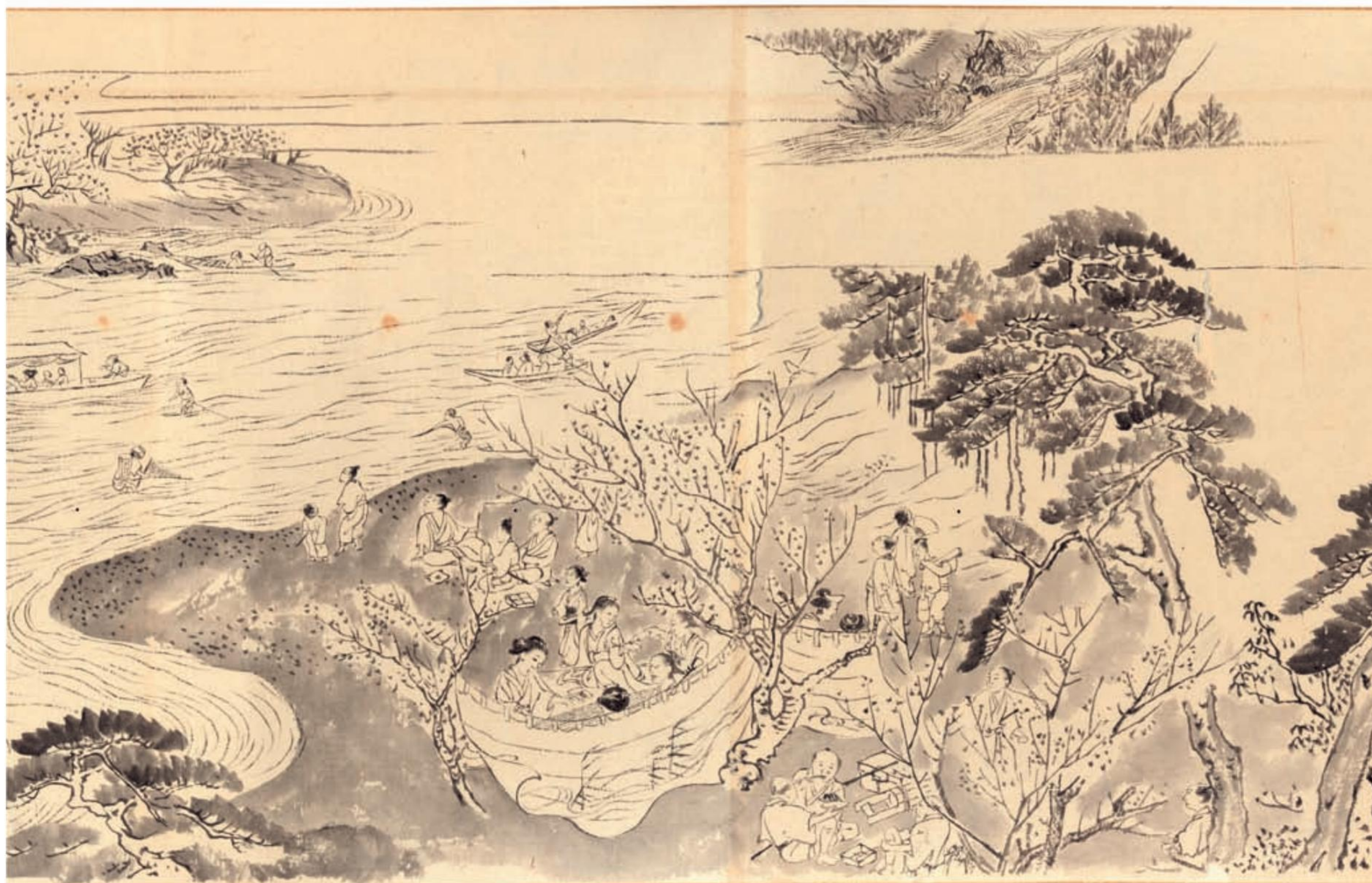
Matsunaga's description, along with the other postscripts, indeed seems to hint at the Kujō's careful management of *Amusement's* production and to a possible 'buzz' circulating around the project amongst the city's literary and artistic communities.

The Met Museum draft (fig. 3), which features all four of Ōkyo's drawings but not Takahashi's poetic compositions, is probably an earlier version of the Detroit draft.¹⁹ The single scroll contains fairly detailed illustrations by Ōkyo in monochrome ink but includes no text other than a brief opening inscription and a *waka* poem (different from the one in the Detroit draft), both inscribed by Takahashi.

2.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao, Draft
of the *Amusements of the
four seasons of Kyoto*, details
of the pictorial sections, ca.
1770-1777, ink on paper.

Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders
Society Purchase, Edsel and
Eleanor Ford Exhibition and
Acquisition Fund, Alan and
Marianne Schwartz Fund with
funds from Michigan National
Corporation, Mrs Howard J.
Stoddard and Mr and Mrs Stanford
C. Stoddard, 1983.21.





The inscription for the paintings of the amusements of Kyoto's four seasons. Around the time I was completing the inscription commissioned by the Kujō family, I added a poem to it [the same inscription] at the behest of Mr Matsuda.²⁰

Written by [Takahashi] Munenao of Wakasa²¹

Traces left behind,
of the strokes of my brush
should they long endure
they will become the keepsakes,
mementoes of this old man.

The 'Mr' Matsuda Takahashi mentions is probably Matsuda Masachika (or Shōji, 1723–1788), a fellow calligrapher and poet — the two may have been friends. At the time the above-quoted inscription was composed,

Takahashi appears to have not yet completed the text that would complement each of the paintings in *Amusements*. It is likely, therefore, that Takahashi finalised the inscriptions while viewing Ōkyo's monochrome illustrations. Considered alongside the Detroit draft, the Met Museum draft offers a glimpse of the artwork at a formative stage²²

Although *Amusements* is undated, scholars have published hypotheses based on the evidence at hand. Shishizaki Iori proposed a dating of 1772–1777, while Kimura Shigekazu suggested a date of 1775 or 1776 after closely scrutinising Ōkyo's signatures and seals in *Amusements*.²³ The dated copy of *Amusements* by Ōkyo's student Genki (Komai Ki, 1747–1797, fig. 4) also allows us to postulate when the Owari Tokugawa received *Amusements*.²⁴ Genki's copy was completed in 1778.²⁵ As Genki could not have executed a copy without access to *Amusements*, the work would then have been gifted to the Owari Tokugawa in late 1778

3.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao, Draft
of *Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*, detail of
spring scene, right half, ink
on paper.

The Metropolitan Museum of
Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke
Collection, Gift of the Mary and
Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015,
www.metmuseum.org.



or 1779. This timing also coincides with Kujō Naozane's ascension to the post of imperial regent.

The Painter and the Calligrapher

Currently designated an Important Artwork by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs, *Amusements* was executed by two of the best-known artists in 1770's Kyoto. Maruyama Ōkyo was a highly skilled painter capable of working in a wide variety of styles, including those of *yamato-e* (Japanese painting), Rinpa, *nanga* (southern painting), and the Kanō school. Moreover, the artist also dedicated time to studying works in the collections of patrons and local temples.²⁶ Although this diligence often led to innovative artistic efforts, Ōkyo was also mindful of his client's tastes, consistently adapting to their wishes. Thus, the paintings of *Amusements* follow a framework favoured by the court, displaying a seasonal progression from spring to winter and featuring famous places, as well as monthly events.

But, in pictorial style and subject matter, the paintings of *Amusements* reflect the prevailing tastes of the elite warrior class and the townsfolk of urban centres like Kyoto. Set

in and along the outskirts of the city and focused on human activity, the four genre scenes of *Amusements* owe a clear debt to the *Scenes in and out of the capital* screens (*Rakuchū rakugaizu byōbu*, fig. 5 and fig. 6, hereafter 'Capital' screens) tradition, one of the specialities of the official Kanō painters.²⁷ Ōkyo's training with Ishida Yūtei (1721–1786) of the Tsuruzawa school, an offshoot of the Kanō, made him proficient in the current Kanō techniques for such imagery. Comparison with a roughly contemporary Kanō-style work, such as Tsuruzawa Tansaku's (1729–1797) *Screens of Uji and tea production* (*Uji seichazu byōbu*), indicates that *Amusements* follows certain Kanō conventions.²⁸ Both Tansaku's screens and *Amusements* eschew the bird's eye overview of an entire city typical of the late 16th and 17th century 'Capital' screens, yet retain an elevated viewpoint in depicting specific locations, populating them with carefully placed groups of figures. The sprinkling of background elements such as distant rooftops and hills, the clouds and mist partitioning the painting surface, and famous places or *meisho* (Uji Bridge in the *Screens of Uji and tea production*) also occur in *Amusements*. But there are subtle differences as well. As will be discussed, Ōkyo placed his unique stamp

4.
Genki (Komai Ki), *Scenes of the four seasons in Kyoto*, part of the summer section, 1778, copy of Maruyama Ōkyo, *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto*, scroll 1, detail of summer painting, ink and colour on silk.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015, www.metmuseum.org.



5.

(Above) Scenes in and out of the capital screens, right screen of a pair, 17th century.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015, www.metmuseum.org.

6.

Scenes in and out of the capital screens, left screen of a pair, 17th century.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015, www.metmuseum.org.

on the paintings of *Amusements*.

Takahashi Munenao's contribution likewise follows the established protocol for commissions from the court. His prose underscores Kyoto's achievements with lively accounts of famed literary and historical figures of the past, as well as contemporary, cultural contributions by the city's luminaries. The evocative text in Takahashi's elegant hand aligns closely with Ōkyo's lyrical paintings, augmenting the visual with vivid descriptions of the sounds and smells of the city. For example, in describing the crowds along the Kamo River, Takahashi writes, "here, there, everywhere are sleight-of-hand tricksters and magicians...The fearful racket of the drums accompanying these men as they hoot and howl seems to answer the river's loud roar and echoes in the heavens". The correlation between text and image, therefore, seems to further support the contention that the project resulted from close collaboration. Takahashi also presents intimate glimpses of life in the city at different times of day within each of the four seasons, moving from day to night in spring, dusk to night in summer, night to late night in autumn, and back to daytime in winter. Intermingled with these textual sketches of a thriving city, however, are acknowledgements of the struggles, as well as the dignity, of ordinary Kyoto residents in the face of hardship. Just as Ōkyo juxtaposed courtly with broader societal painting preferences, Takahashi also artfully complemented elegant descriptions with observations about the human condition that were universally shared amongst all classes.

Hybridity in Format, Organisation, and Theme

Amusements is composed of two illustrated handscrolls, a format with a long courtly tradition. Facilitating intimate viewing and suggesting a temporal progression, pictorial

handscrolls provide a high impact experience in a relatively small package. Indeed, scholars have described such scrolls as premodern 'moving pictures'. *Amusements* thus can be understood as vignettes of Kyoto life over the course of a single year.

Organisationally, the text and images of *Amusements* progress from spring to winter, following precedents in Japanese literature and visual art, which were established by the imperial court (emulating continental models).²⁹ In the first scroll, the viewer experiences spring blossom-viewing at Arashiyama (fig. 7) and the cool breezes along the Kamo River (fig. 8) in summer. The *obon* festival dancing (fig. 9) of autumn and the activities associated with winter's New Year's celebration (fig. 10) appear in the second

Additionally, in these images and descriptive text, the traditional interest in scenic places blends seamlessly with the depiction of monthly events, another established genre inaugurated by courtiers. The spring and summer paintings — set in Arashiyama (fig. 7) and along the Kamo River (fig. 8) — represent famous places; the autumn and winter scenes describe the activities of *obon* dancing (fig. 9) and the pre-New Year's preparations (fig. 10) respectively.³⁰ Each scroll opens with a reference to a seasonal practice stemming from the imperial court, while the scene that follows describes activities enjoyed by all levels of Kyoto society. Furthermore, the first scroll presents scenes of relaxation, while the second scroll concentrates on activities derived from ritual, and thus consequential, purposes. The underlying order therefore not only follows a conventional seasonal cycle but also underscores the leadership of the city's elites in leisure, as well as ceremony.

In theme, however, *Amusements* reflects more recent popular trends. Following the precedent set by the 'Capital' screens, as well as contemporary variations in painted and

printed form, *Amusements* highlights the Kyoto crowds.³¹ Even the famous place pictures of the first scroll emphasise people over place, including representatives of nearly all social classes, male and female, young and old. Members of the court and feudal lords, however, are absent. Unlike the elite of Western Europe, high-ranking Japanese of the 18th century, with the exception of the daimyo processing to and from the political capital of Edo, tended to be private (thus with their presence obliquely referenced) and not public figures, a circumstance reflected in the paintings of *Amusements*.³²

The images of *Amusements* also represent spatial movement from the outlying areas of the city to its innermost streets, which can be thought of as an abstracted, handscroll adaptation of the typical layout of a pair of 'Capital' screens. Nevertheless, famed temples and retreat villas do not appear — the viewer experiences accessible spaces and events. The spring composition is set in the western periphery of Kyoto, while the summer scene takes place along the Kamo River, which marks the eastern city limits. The visualisations of autumn and winter instead describe two unspecified streets of the city proper. The paintings of *Amusements*, therefore, progress from a scenic playground in the outskirts of the metropolis to the various spectacles occurring first at the boundary of the city (Shijō riverbank) and then deep into the urban centre itself. Accordingly, the presented view also becomes more and more intimate from seasonal scene to seasonal scene with the autumn and winter images offering the most close-up renderings.³³

Unlike the 'Capital' screens which are entirely pictorial and can be viewed all at once, *Amusements* is apprehended sequentially with a textual, followed by a visual, representation for each seasonal pastime, mirroring the format of courtly illustrated handscrolls.

Amusements additionally can be understood to be driven by the Kujō's continuing engagement with the repertoire of the Kyoto-based Kyō Kanō atelier of painters, from which the family had commissioned works since the 17th century.³⁴ The 'Capital' screens were a popular Kanō speciality. But *Amusements*'s Kyoto cityscapes are far from the sinicised landscapes, Confucian paragons, and Daoist motifs featured in the works executed by Kyō Kanō artists for the Kujō in the past, which suggests an expansion of the Kujō's artistic interests. Nonetheless, in the eyes of the Owari Tokugawa, these descriptions of thriving Kyoto residents enjoying their leisure time read as praise for Tokugawa rule — able governance allows for that prosperity.³⁵ For the Kujō, *Amusements*' rendering of the city's seasonal activities also underscored the poetry of play, a perspective facilitated by courtier sensitivities and Kyoto's unique history.

The Poetry of Play in the Seasonal Scenes

The four seasonal sections of *Amusements* balance the poetic impulses of the court with more popular representations of play. The first scroll opens with textual and visual descriptions of spring in Arashiyama. From classical times (Heian period, 794–1192), Arashiyama was renowned for maple leaves, an autumn marker, as depicted in another Ōkyo work, the 1789–1795 pair of hanging scrolls *Spring View of Momoyama* (fig. 11) and *Autumn View of Arashiyama* (fig. 12); however, the locale had recently gained renown as a cherry blossom-viewing destination.³⁶ In the inscription preceding the painting, Takahashi Munenao acknowledges this break with tradition.

In the form of the mountain and the flow of the river, Arashiyama is beyond compare.

Although the well-known outing of the second year of Kanna (986) did not occur when the flowers were blooming, the story of the three boats afloat at this place and the participation of Kintō — who was a master of the three skills — has been passed down through successive generations and preserved in poetry collections.³⁷

Despite the seasonal shift in its representation, Arashiyama deserves to ‘lead off’ the two-handscroll set because the locale not only is picturesque but also has associations with the Kyoto nobility.³⁸ The latter point obliquely refers to the patron, the Kujō. Might the family have enjoyed spring visits to Arashiyama?

In either case, Kyoto guidebooks from the late 17th century onwards had already begun to tout Arashiyama as a scenic destination worthy of a visit in both spring and autumn.³⁹ The entry on Arashiyama from the 1658 *Child of the Capital* (*Kyō warabe*), for example, includes a description that states “Arashiyama — this mountain is the place where the cherry trees of Yoshino have been transplanted”.⁴⁰ Since Yoshino’s cherry blossoms were considered the country’s finest, the guidebook encourages spring visits to the region.⁴¹ Writing in 1799, Ban Kōkei (1733–1806) described Arashiyama as a place that “up until twenty years ago, was a playground for only those of elegant pursuits [or those who composed verse] ...but these days, everyone goes to Arashiyama to enjoy the blossoms...”.⁴² Literary evidence supports Kōkei’s account. From about the mid-18th century, the number of recorded poems praising the spring flowers outnumbered those inspired by autumn colours.⁴³ Thus, the Arashiyama represented in *Amusements* asserts a contemporary identity as a recreational site with a classical, courtly heritage.

Arashiyama’s appeal as a place to relax and play is evident in Ōkyo’s painting, in which the artist presents a bird’s-eye view of the site on a bright, spring day (fig. 7). The composition also refers to specific poetic markers or *utamakura* (placename linked to poetry), which originate from aristocratically authored observations and narratives, that clearly identify the landscape as that of Arashiyama.⁴⁴ Arashiyama itself is an *utamakura*, as is the Ōi River, which dominates Ōkyo’s composition.⁴⁵ In fact, this waterway serves as an indispensable signifier for Arashiyama in pictorial representations. The boats traversing the waters and the people admiring their surroundings also are understood as linked to the *utamakura* of Arashiyama.⁴⁶

Over the centuries, succeeding emperors continued to visit the area, a practice that endured into the Tokugawa era (1603–1868). Takahashi’s inscription accompanying the Arashiyama painting cites a poem written by an emperor “of recent times”.⁴⁷

Ōigawa	Ōi River
tōki ato nomi	in its far distant traces,
san no bune	a long time ago,
ukabeshi, ato wa	witnessed three honoured boats
oyo o hedateru	floating on its rippling waves. ⁴⁸

These words recall not only the renowned *waka* poet and critic Fujiwara Kintō’s (966–1041) tributes to Arashiyama but also the imperial outings to the area in which Kintō, as well as other luminaries from the past, had participated.⁴⁹ Both the Arashiyama painting and the accompanying text therefore clearly refer to a courtly heritage specific to Arashiyama and the Ōi River, one that was particularly meaningful to the Kujō and to the calligrapher Takahashi, who amongst other

pursuits was a scholar of the classical language of the court.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, these representations of spring also refer to Arashiyama's more recent renown as a popular playground for all.

The subject of the summer scene features a crowd composed of individuals from all walks of life who stroll and relax along the Shijō (Fourth Avenue) riverbank of the Kamo River (fig. 8). People had converged onto Shijō to enjoy the theatres and sideshows long before the 18th century.⁵¹ Takahashi's prose and Ōkyo's painting, however, describe the more recent summer practice of enjoying the cooler temperatures by the river at twilight. Linked to the famed Gion Festival, this gathering along the shores by Shijō began to occur after the 1670 construction of the Kamo River embankment.⁵² From the 7th to the 18th day of the sixth lunar month, the area along the waters by Shijō was crowded with temporary shops and eateries.⁵³ Platforms placed in the shallows created spaces for people to picnic and enjoy the cool breezes. In the early evening, the masses converged on the area, generating a spectacle that inspired testimonials in pictorial and textual form. For example, Nishōtei Hanzan's (1713–1783) account from 1766–1767 describes the atmosphere there with enthusiasm.

Along Shijō, where people go to enjoy the evening cool, stages are set up...Looking across all this from the Sanjō (Third Avenue) Bridge, because the lights/fires of an innumerable number of lanterns can be seen, it is like an Edo conflagration.⁵⁴

By the 18th century, the Shijō riverbank indeed had become a famous place, albeit one without a literary pedigree.

Nonetheless, *Amusements'* text and image imbue a poetic charm to the scene. In his prose, Takahashi evokes a visual and olfactory sense of a visit to the Shijō riverbank after dark, depicting an elegant atmosphere.

...torches are lit, and those lights appear more densely packed than the stars in the heavens and brighter than a sunny afternoon. The gathering crowd of young and old envelops the area like clouds, resembling mist. The scent on the sleeves of those in the crowd is the fragrance of the river winds, and the glittering of tortoiseshell, silver ornamental hairpins are reflected in the moon above Higashiyama, causing them to look like deep pools of pure water.

Takahashi describes walking in the crowd as a pleasant stroll in a clean, well lit, and gently perfumed locale, surrounded by the well-heeled and the well-mannered rather than the sticky, smoky clustering of humanity that was actually experienced. Takahashi also refers to the Kamo River's ties to the imperial court of the classical past by linking the delicacies to be found in the river to those that existed in the 11th century.

Living within these waters, the goby fish is an especially rare find... These fish are described as "bullhead from the nearby river" in the Pink chapter of *The tale of Genji*.⁵⁵

The gathered crowd along the riverbank enjoys the spoils of the waters just as the princely hero of *The tale of Genji* did. As a consequence, the representation of the summer spectacle subtly gains an air of sophistication.



7.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao,
*Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*, spring
scene, ca. late 1770s, ink
and colour on silk.

Tokugawa Art Museum Image
Archives/DNPartcom.

Ōkyo's painting further enhances the lyricism of Takahashi's prose and curiously includes a group of peasants relaxing on the riverbank (fig. 8). Their tattered clothing, as well as their physical separation from the revellers on the island, sets them apart; yet they seem comfortable and welcomed. Takahashi also notes their presence in his prose.

8.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao,
*Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*, summer
scene, ca. late 1770s, ink
and colour on silk.

Tokugawa Art Museum Image
Archives/DNPartcom.

Among these revellers are those who are rescued from hunger today, but whose food stores will not hold out tomorrow...How do they keep their hold on life, when it is as fragile as the dewdrops clinging to a leaf? Those lacking even shelter from the rain or dew...camp upon the gravel of the dry riverbed.

Although the small group participates in the seasonal pastime of relaxing by the riverbank at twilight, their inclusion seems to run counter to the sense of prosperity presented throughout *Amusements*. Nevertheless, they appear at the far left of the scene, albeit easy to miss should the handscroll be viewed while being held between both hands, a shoulder-width at a time. But the question remains, why incorporate these figures at all? Again, Takahashi's inscription provides an answer. Referring to the generous practices of the Heian era, Takahashi notes "...each of these people has managed to gather together a small bag of possessions. What might be in it? According to ancient historical records, wealthier citizens distributed 'beggar bags' to save those poverty-stricken people". Through a reference to the classical past, Takahashi underscores not only the city's long history but also its charitable customs. A subtle sense of Kyoto pride thus can be said to be imbricated within this scene of recreation and relaxation.

9.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao,
*Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*, autumn
scene, ca. late 1770s, ink
and colour on silk.

Tokugawa Art Museum Image
Archives/DNPartcom.

10.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao,
*Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*, winter
scene, ca. late 1770s, ink
and colour on silk.

Tokugawa Art Museum Image
Archives/DNPartcom.

Ōkyo based this summer painting of *Amusements* on one of his earlier works, the 1767 hanging scroll, *Cooling off by the Shijō riverbank* (hereafter *Cooling*), executed for the imperial prince-abbot Yūjō.⁵⁶ It is possible that for *Amusements*, the Kujō decided to work with Ōkyo based on their familiarity with *Cooling*. While Ōkyo simply may have elected to take advantage of an existing compositional template, the close similarity between the two paintings suggests that the Kujō had at least known about *Cooling* and requested a comparable image for *Amusements*. Both works feature an elevated, angled viewpoint onto the scene, the shallow waters of the Kamo River, and a demonstration of Ōkyo's skill at rendering the human body in all its variety. Unlike *Cooling*, the expanded coverage in *Amusements* includes temporary shops and restaurants, as well as a hint of the city's structures in the distance — while the focus remains on the revellers, the particularities of the locale also receive attention. Indeed, the parallels between *Amusements*' representation of the area and the earlier *Cooling* indicate the Kujō's expanding tastes in painting subjects. Featuring a popular recreational spot combined with poetic references to the area's classical past, the summer scene is a rich hybrid representation of the Shijō riverbank.

The second scroll features generic streets of the city proper — not famous places far from the centre of town — as the location of seasonal play. The textual and pictorial descriptions of autumn capture the joyous atmosphere associated with *obon* dancing, which occurs as part of the eponymous festival. Like the outings to Arashiyama, *obon* rites originated (largely) with the Kyoto nobility.⁵⁷ The festive aspect of *obon* observances — lanterns and dancing — arose during the Muromachi period (1392–1573). By the 16th century, Japanese of all walks of life embraced the festival and the corresponding dance, but the activity remained

corresponding with Kyoto (home to the largest concentration of Buddhist temple headquarters in the nation) due to its origins as a Buddhist practice and an imperial court rite.⁵⁸

Like the first scroll, Takahashi refers to a past courtly connection to what had become a common seasonal diversion.

Looking into the origins of this bon dancing...the diary of Major Counsellor Nakayama Sadachika (Teishin) includes the following entry under the seventeenth year of Eishō (1520):
“When night fell, five or six of us went out to enjoy the dancing and festival music together. This *bon* dancing and music have been taking place every evening this year, though nothing of this kind had been seen or heard in recent times.”

The participation of courtiers, past and present, lends an air of elegance to the city’s *obon* dancing. Moreover, Takahashi further celebrates Kyoto *obon* by naming famed historical figures in his remarks on the extensive interest in the various forms of dancing that overwhelmed the city during this time.

Everyone everywhere does this bon dancing. At the Kūyadō where the holy monk Kūya once lived, the dancing *nembutsu* first was performed. Moreover, the dance of Matsugasaki derives from the time of the revered priest Nichiren. Since such dancing takes place even at temples isolated from the mundane world, there must be a history behind the bon dancing as well.

In fact, the reference to the monk Kūya (903–972) may have been an intentional nod to Tokugawa Munechika, the intended recipient of *Amusements*. The legendary originator of the dancing recitation of the Amida Buddha’s

name (*odori nembutsu*), Kūya purportedly took his religious vows, not in a Kyoto monastery, but at a temple in Owari province, Munechika’s fief.⁵⁹ Through Takahashi’s prose, a subtle connection between the Owari Tokugawa and Kyoto could have been inferred, as well as a poetic sensibility underlying the revelry of Kyoto *obon* dancing.

Ōkyo’s painting complements this textual description, presenting people of all ages participating in the merrymaking (fig. 9). In a break from convention, Ōkyo created what can be described as an insider’s view of Kyoto *obon* dancing. If we compare Ōkyo’s work to the section representing the 7th month from the mid-Edo period screen, *Genre scenes of the twelve months*, significant differences can be discerned.⁶⁰ Also set on an urban street, the *obon* image from the *Genre scenes of the twelve months* describes a group of dancers who form a tidy circle around the assembled musicians, while two clusters of observers stand on either side. In contrast, Ōkyo’s *obon* dancing scene lacks discernible drums or flutes; dancers step to their own beat or to music performed ‘off stage’. Additionally, the participants do not move in unison, forming instead a winding parade. In fact, many of them concentrate less on their movements and more on their surroundings, unabashedly looking into shop windows.

Ōkyo’s composition, while idealised for decorative effect, nevertheless appears as though it is partially based on direct observation. The telescopic view of the dancing further enhances this impression — by the late 1770s, Ōkyo’s reputation as an artist who ‘captured life’ (*shasei*) was firmly established; thus, *Amusements*’ viewers could anticipate an engagement with Kyoto *obon* celebrations vis-à-vis a recognisable depiction of dancing in the streets. Overall, both text and image provide a far more intimate and detailed glimpse of this celebratory gathering than a commercially available Kyoto

guidebook could. This familiar, yet novel, representation of Kyoto *obon* dancing, can be read as a poetic homage to the city's spin on a nationwide pastime, as well as to the prosperity made possible by Tokugawa rule.

The final inscription and painting of *Amusements* portraying Kyoto in winter also offer a charming hybrid of popular genre scenes and a sense of observed reporting. The textual and pictorial descriptions conjure the feeling of optimism and excitement that elites might experience as they prepared for the upcoming New Year's festivities (fig. 10). For example, Takahashi playfully notes that

when the twelfth month arrives, in anticipation of the spring [the new year], households dust off the soot clustered even into the spaces where the ceiling meets the area on top of the ridge beams. How amusing to observe the manservants whose faces are so blackened with soot that they become unrecognisable.

Amusements concludes, therefore, with a practice shared by all classes, albeit unequally, throughout the nation. Winter in Kyoto, like everywhere else, signals an end to one year and the beginning of the next. In a sense, this final section presents the city as a microcosm of the country.

Ōkyo's painting of a snowy street bustling with activity closely adheres to convention, yet also subtly suggests a locational specificity, which in turn was likely bolstered by his reputation as an artist who 'captured life'. Except for the swaths of rolling mist at the upper and lower left of the composition, viewers experience a clear day with only the snow hinting at the chill in the air. At the lower right, a group of children push a snowball down the street. In the accompanying inscription, Takahashi describes them as follows:

Children with happy faces gather together to create a snowball with their small hands. What started out as the size of a metal bowl soon becomes taller than the children themselves, who then no longer have the strength to move the snowball on their own.

As a pictorial trope, snowball rolling boasts origins in paintings of aristocratic pastimes. Renderings of court gentlemen and ladies creating giant snowballs with the aid of long sticks appear in genre scenes from as early as the Kamakura period (1185–1333).⁶¹ Takahashi obliquely refers to the pleasure that the Kyoto nobility derived from such play in his remarks: "Each time it snows, one cannot help but recall the beautiful mountain of snow created in the garden of the imperial palace". The pastime was probably not restricted to the elite, but commoners did not initially appear in these images. Visualisations of the activity began to feature first samurai then mundane participants by the late 16th century.⁶² Thus, even such an ordinary pleasure can take on a veneer of elegance with its connection to an activity enjoyed by the imperial court for centuries.

Other stock figures from genre scenes populate this winter painting, including two men who beat the dust and dirt out of *tatami* flooring in front of a residence at the upper right. Takahashi's inscription adds to the immediacy of Ōkyo's depiction with this account of the clamour arising from the street: "The sound of folks pounding the dust and dirt off of the *tatami* floor mats resembles that of a sudden hailstorm". Where the side street meets the main avenue, three *sekizoro* (seasonal heralds, fig. 13) walk about with exaggerated hand gestures, red kerchiefs covering their faces, and a cluster of green branches on their heads. *The book of days* (*Hinami kiji*) by Kurokawa Dōyū (?–1691) lists



11.
Maruyama Ōkyo, *Spring*
view of Momoyama,
1789–1795, one of a pair of
hanging scrolls, ink and
colour on paper.
Private collection.



12.
Maruyama Ōkyo, *Autumn*
view of Arashiyama,
1789–1795, one of a pair of
hanging scrolls, ink and
colour on paper.
Private collection.

sekizoro as active between the 22nd and 28th days of the twelfth lunar month, noting that they visit people's homes in pairs or groups of four in return for which they receive modest monetary offerings.⁶³ Takahashi adds that:

as a group, these heralds go from house to house...When they clap their hands and proclaim auspicious tidings, they shout "sekizoro, sekizoro," the chanting and hearing of which are reminders that the year is coming to an end.

Emerging from a tradition of wandering well-wishers, these *sekizoro* became symbols of the year's end not just in Kyoto, but throughout the country. *Sekizoro* in particular almost always were included in genre paintings of the twelfth month's activities. They appear in Kanō Eitoku's (1543–1590) *Scenes in and out of the capital screens* and the 17th-century monthly events screens such as the *Genre scenes of the twelve months*.⁶⁴

In fact, the paintings of *Amusements*, and in particular, the winter scene, consistently borrow from the conventions established in these pictorial genres, indicating the Kujō's willingness to support subjects of a more commonly appreciated mode, albeit with the intended recipient, the Owari Tokugawa in mind. Ōkyo's paintings alone, while charming and subtly suggestive of observed reality, do not carry the same impact as when considered concurrently with Takahashi's poetic prose. *Amusements* is certainly a hybrid work displaying a juxtaposition of popular and poetic representation. In the hands of Ōkyo and Takahashi, play becomes poetic, just as poetry so often becomes play.

The lyrical tone of Takahashi's inscriptions and Ōkyo's lively vignettes not only enhanced the aesthetic impact of *Amusements* but also expressed the cultural identity of Kyoto, a city engaged with the

courtly poetics of the past, as well as the popular trends of the present. This confluence seems appropriate given the patron and *Amusements*' intended recipient. But, for the Owari Tokugawa, the text and images of the two-handscroll set also spoke of the prosperity resulting from the Pax Tokugawa. One wonders though. Might Tokugawa Munechika have gleaned a more specific message from the Kujō upon thoughtful study of *Amusements*? In its inscriptions and paintings, *Amusements* describes Kyoto's present as enlivened by the city's past, as well as thriving under Tokugawa rule. Thus, what the Kujō seem to be articulating to the Owari Tokugawa is this: in this era of peace, Kyoto not only endures but shines; may you perform your duties with the aplomb that we have ours.

Conclusion

Amusements served as a means to strengthen the ties between the Kujō and the Owari Tokugawa. Indeed, both parties were motivated to do so. Kujō Naozane had been involved in the 1758–1759 Hōreki incident, supporting the banishment of attendants who threatened the court's accord with the Tokugawa government.⁶⁵ Tokugawa Munechika also understood the importance of avoiding the wrath of the main Tokugawa house. His father, Tokugawa Munekatsu (1705–1761), became the Owari lord (chiefly) due to his predecessor's (Muneharu, 1696–1764) criticisms of the shogun's policies.⁶⁶ Thus, besides the Owari Tokugawa's traditional support of the court, the Kujō also likely appreciated their shared desire to remain in the Tokugawa government's good graces. Accordingly, the hybridity evident in *Amusements* might be viewed as a merging of courtier and elite warrior preferences, a union driven by common aims — the Pax Tokugawa and Kyoto's achievements, past and present, are celebrated. For the Kujō and those in

their cultural circle, in particular, *Amusements* offered a tantalising multivalence, one that is obscured to modern viewers when focus on Ōkyo's paintings overshadows Takahashi's elegant prose. It is that multivalency that this paper has attempted to excavate and examine.

As scholars have determined, the 18th century witnessed Kyoto in a state of flux, entrenched in tradition, while also seeking change. The court was likely the most tentative of those looking beyond convention, but as the case of *Amusements* suggests, the Kyoto nobility was, at least in

its engagement with the arts, dabbling in the novel. *Amusements* transmits an experience of Kyoto that resonated across social class and, figuratively, across time — the city's past and present is represented — which in and of itself is not unique. The innovation lies in the juxtaposition of the courtly poetic reflex with the celebration of mundane pastimes. *Amusements* makes an impact, just as the Kujō hoped it would. The collaborative effort not only expresses appreciation for the peace afforded by Tokugawa rule but also applauds Kyoto through the poetry of play.



13.
Maruyama Ōkyo and
Takahashi Munenao,
*Amusements of the four
seasons of Kyoto*, winter
scene, detail: sekizoro
(seasonal heralds), ca.
late 1770s, ink and colour
on silk.

Tokugawa Art Museum Image
Archives/DNPartcom.

NOTES

- 1 Karaku is one of Kyoto's many monikers written with Chinese characters that roughly translate to 'flower capital'. Takahashi Munenao was a scholar of Confucianism (as a student of Itō Tōgai (1670–1736)), Shinto, and National Learning (or *kokugaku*, the study of ancient Japanese thought and literature), as well as a *waka* poet and renowned calligrapher. Takahashi also studied the classical language of the court and lent his brush to numerous projects, as well as his services as a teacher in later life. After a long career in Kyoto, Takahashi settled in Okazaki village to the east of the city before his death in 1785. See the *Kokin bokuseki kantei binran* (*Guide to a survey of writings past and present*, 1848) in: *Kinsei jinmeiroku shūsei* (*Collection of famous personages of the early modern era*) vol. 4 (Mori Senzō, ed.), Tōkyō-toritsu chūō toshokan, Tokyo 1976, p. 136. Maruyama Ōkyo was one Kyoto's best-known painters, developing a hybrid style that combined a recognisable fidelity to nature with idealistic touches known as *shaseiga* or 'pictures that capture life'. *Shaseiga* reverberated in Japanese painting circles long after Ōkyo's death. A prolific painter, the artist received commissions from princes, high-ranking warriors, temples, and wealthy merchants, but also created pictures for peep boxes and designs for lacquerware. The first of Ōkyo's biographers was his student, Oku Bunmei (?–1813), who wrote 'Biography of the pure hermit Maruyama sensei (Sensai Maruyama-sensei den)' in 1801. See Mori Senzō, 'Maruyama Ōkyo den tōki (Report on a biography of Maruyama Ōkyo)', in: *Bijutsukenkyū* vol. 36, 1934, pp. 584–593, and Mori Senzō *chosakushū* (*Collected writings of Mori Senzō*) 3, Chūō Kōron, Tokyo 1971, pp. 439–446. There have been numerous studies of Ōkyo published since the 1880s, including Okakura (Kakuzo) Tenshin's essay, 'Maruyama Ōkyo', in the first issue of the Japanese art journal *Kokka* of 1889. More recent efforts are the scholarly essays published in the 2016 exhibition catalogue, *Maruyama Ōkyo: opening up new terrain in Japanese painting, special exhibition celebrating the museum's 75th anniversary*, Nezu Museum, Tokyo; Reizei Tamehito's 2017 book, *Maruyama Ōkyo ron*, Shibunkaku, Kyoto; and *Legendary Kyoto painting from Maruyama Ōkyo to the modern era*, University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts, Asahi Shinbun, Kyūryūdo and The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo and Kyoto 2019. The most comprehensive scholarly work to date is Sasaki Jōhei and Sasaki Masako, *Maruyama Ōkyo kenkyū* (*Maruyama Ōkyo studies*), Chūō Kōron, Tokyo 1996.
- 2 *Amusements* never left the collection of the Owari Tokugawa family, which is now stewarded by the Tokugawa Reimeikai Foundation (established in 1931 by the 19th head of the Owari Tokugawa, Tokugawa Yoshichika (1886–1976)), and is housed as part of the Tokugawa Art Museum in Nagoya Japan.
- 3 Shogunal patronage of gifted artists in the Muromachi era (1392–1573) is the subject of Varley, H.P., 'Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and the world of

- Kitayama: social change and shogunal patronage in early Muromachi Japan,' in: *Japan in the Muromachi age* (Hall, J.W., and Toyoda Takeshi, eds), University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1977, pp. 183–204. For the early modern era, see Munemasa Isoo, *Nihon kinsei bun'en no kenkyū* (*Studies of the literary circles of early modern Japan*), Miraisha, Tokyo 1977. Yoko Woodson provides a concise overview of societal conditions in 18th century Kyoto supporting such crossing of class boundaries in 'Introduction: Traditions unbound', in: *Traditions unbound: groundbreaking painters of eighteenth-century Kyoto* (McKelway, M.P., ed.), Asian Art Museum, San Francisco 2006, pp. 15–19. See also Beerens, A., 'The prince who collected scholars: the network of Myōhō-in no Miya Shinnin Hōshinnō (1765–1805)', in: *Uncharted waters: intellectual life in the Edo period, essays in honour of W.J. Boot* (Beerens, A., and M. Teeuwen, eds), Brill, Leiden, Boston 2012, pp. 35–51.
- 4 Scholarly works covering this topic include Takahashi Hiromi, *Kyoto geien no nettowaaku* (*Kyoto scholar-artist networks*), Perikan-sha, Tokyo 1988 and specifically on painters, *Miyako no eshi wa hyakka ryōran — 'Heian jinbutsu shi' ni miru Edo jidai no Kyoto gadan* (*Blooming of hundreds of flowers: painters of Edo period Kyoto in the 'Who's who of Kyoto'*), The Museum of Kyoto, Kyoto 1998. See also Kyoto-shi, *Kyoto no rekishi* (*History of Kyoto*) vol. 6, Gakugei Shorin, Tokyo 1968–76, pp. 184–210, which discusses the cultural networks of the city in the second half of the 18th century into the 19th century.
 - 5 In 1917, Shishizaki Iori published the earliest focused study of Ōkyo's paintings for *Amusements* in the art journal, *Kokka*, which was followed by a supplement, also authored by Shishizaki in 1920. Along with a brief description of Ōkyo's seasonal images, the articles provide foundational information including the name of the calligrapher, Takahashi Munenao, an account of his successful career at court, and the Kujō family's patronage, as well as their intention to gift the two-handscroll set to the lord of the Owari domain. An extant draft version of *Amusements* (now in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts) is acknowledged, and one of its postscripts is quoted in the 1917 essay as the source, identifying the patron and the recipient. Moreover, in the supplement, Shishizaki posits a completion date of between 1772 and 1777 for the undated *Amusements*. Kimura Shigekazu, in the Hyōgo Prefectural Museum's 1994 catalogue for their special exhibition on Ōkyo in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the artist's death, suggested a more specific dating of 1775 or 1776 for *Amusements* based on his analysis of the signatures and seals found at the end of each scroll. See Shishizaki Iori, 'Maruyama Ōkyo hitsu shiki yūroku zukan (*Pastimes and amusements of the four seasons* by Maruyama Ōkyo)', in: *Kokka*, 331, 1917, pp. 201–202; Shishizaki Iori, 'Ōkyo hitsu shiki yūroku zukan kai (*Understanding pastimes and amusements of the four seasons* by Ōkyo)', in: *Kokka*, 367, 1920, p. 201; and Kimura Shigekazu, catalogue entry for *Amusements of the capital's four seasons* in *Maruyama*

Ōkyō ten: bōgō zoonen kinen (Special exhibition on Maruyama Ōkyō: on the 200th anniversary of his death), Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of Art, Hyōgo Prefecture 1994, p. 43.

6 The spring section features a quoted *waka* poem as well. Please see the analysis of the springtime representations of Kyoto. In 1985, Yoshizawa Chū published an analysis and transcription of Takahashi Munenao's inscriptions in the detailed draft of *Amusements* (in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts since 1983, fig. 2) mentioned in Shishizaki Iori's two essays (see previous note). In content, the draft's inscriptions are identical to those of *Amusements*. I have compared Takahashi's inscriptions on the Detroit draft with those of *Amusements*. They are very nearly indistinguishable; the only differences are in the use of Japanese *kana* instead of the *kanji* (Chinese character) and vice-versa in some cases. For example, この instead of 此 or 物 instead of もの. Following the Detroit Institute of Arts acquisition of the draft, Professor Robert Brower translated Takahashi's inscriptions but did not publish them. Please refer to Yoshizawa Chū, 'Maruyama Ōkyō hitsu *Shiki yūaku zukan shita-e ni tsuite* (Regarding the draft of the *Pastimes and amusements of the four seasons* illustrated handscroll by Maruyama Ōkyō)', in: *Kokka*, 1081, 1985, pp. 11–19. My thanks to former Assistant Curator of Asian Art, Amelia Chau, for providing a copy of Professor Brower's unpublished translation. All translations of Takahashi's inscriptions quoted in this paper, however, are by the author.

7 For example, see *The shogun age exhibition from the Tokugawa art museum, Japan*, The Shogun Age Exhibition Executive Committee, Tokyo 1983, pp. 208–211.

8 The Kujō trace their descent to Fujiwara Tadamichi's (1097–1164) third son, Kujō Kanezane (1149–1207). As one of the five regental families eligible to hold the offices of regent and chancellor, the Kujō maintained a degree of power throughout the premodern period. For further information, consult the *Kodansha encyclopedia of Japan*, s.v. 'Kujō Family'. On the regental families and the aristocracy in pre-modern Japan, see Butler, L., *Emperor and aristocracy in Japan, 1467–1680*, Harvard University Asia Center, distributed by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London 2002. According to the 1805 *Shinkai dairizu*, a map of the imperial palace compound and surrounding aristocratic residences (which is based on an original published by Hayashi Yoshinaga (flourished late 17th-early 18th c.), the Kujō received 2043 *koku* annually, quite high for an aristocratic house, but a modest sum compared to those of high-ranking *daimyo*. An 1812 reprinting of the 1805 *Shinkai dairizu* is part of the Mitsui Collection of the East Asian Library at UC Berkeley.

The Owari domain, which now encompasses much of western Aichi prefecture, was ruled from Nagoya Castle, located about 81 miles east of Kyoto. For further information on the Kujō's patronage of Kyoto artists, see Kameda-Madar, K., *Pictures of social networks: transforming visual*

representations of the Orchid Pavilion gathering in the Tokugawa period (1615–1868), PhD diss., University of British Columbia 2011.

9 The Owari Tokugawa trace their lineage to Tokugawa Yoshinao (1600–1650), 9th son of Tokugawa Ieyasu (1545–1616), founder of the Tokugawa shogunate. Succeeding as Owari lord in 1761, Tokugawa Munechika is remembered for his land and administrative reforms, as well as for his support of Meirindō, a domain school established by the Confucian scholar Hosoi Heishū (1728–1801). See the *Kodansha encyclopedia of Japan*, s.v. 'Tokugawa Family' and *Edo jidai zen daimyō-ke jiten* (Complete dictionary of daimyo families), (Kudō Hiromasa, ed.), s.v. 'Owari Tokugawa Munechika'.

10 *Kuge jiten* (Dictionary of the aristocracy), (Hashimoto Masanobu, ed.), Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, Tokyo 2010, p. 1045.

11 For further information on the Owari Tokugawa's strained relationship with the shogun (and support of the imperial court) in the early 18th century, see Chikamatsu Shigenori, *Enkakuinsama goden jūgokajō* (*Fifteen admonitions for future generations of the Owari house*) the contents of which were purportedly described to Shigenori in his conversations with Owari Tokugawa Yoshimichi (1689–1713, 4th lord). Discussed in Tsuji Tatsuya, *Tennō to shogun* (Emperor and shogun), *Nihon no kinsei 2* (Early modern Japan 2), Chūō kōron, Tokyo 1991, pp. 238–241. For a discussion of gift-giving as a social practice among elites, see Berry, M.E., 'Public peace and private attachment: the goals and conduct of power in early modern Japan', in: *Journal of Japanese studies*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Summer, 1986), pp. 237–271. I have not found any record of the gifts that Naozane must have given to others.

12 Shishizaki, *op. cit.* (1917), p. 202 and for further information on Takahashi Munenao, refer to the *Kokin bokuseki kantei binran* (Mori Senzō, ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 136. See also *Shogun age exhibition from the Tokugawa art museum, Japan*, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

13 Ōkyō's name is listed in the 'painters' section of the first three editions of the *Who's who of Kyoto* or the *Heian jinbutsu shi*, published in 1768, 1775, and 1782. Takahashi made the list as part of the scholar's section in the 1782 edition. For a concise chart of the luminaries listed in the *Who's who of Kyoto*, 1782, please see the Ritsumeikan university site: <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/~mito3437/coe/heian/tenmeiz>. Copies of the numerous editions of the *Who's who of Kyoto*, as well as other guides to famous figures of the Tokugawa era, are included in *Kinsei jinmeiroku shūsei* (Collection of famous personages of the early modern era), vol. 1, (Mori Senzō, ed.), Tōkyō-toritsu chūō toshokan, Tokyo 1976.

14 Given the polished nature of the text and images, the Detroit draft may be a documentary copy rather than a final detailed draft. Until further evidence is uncovered, this paper will assume the latter. I thank Helen Mitsu Nagata for bringing this possibility to my attention.

15 Teikan, also known as the father of Japanese archaeology, was a close

friend of Kō Fuyō. Yoshizawa, *op. cit.*, p. 16 and Takeuchi, M., *Taiga's true views: the language of landscape painting in eighteenth-century Japan*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA 1992, p. 16. See also Fukushi Yuya, 'Maruyama Ōkyo hitsu 'Momoyama shunkeizu Arashiyama shukeizu' ni tsuite — meishoe to shite no ichizuke to sansha to no kakawari (Regarding Maruyama Ōkyo's *Spring scenery of Momoyama, Autumn scenery of Arashiyama's* position as famous place pictures and the relationship to those who inscribed poems on the paintings)', in: *Shizuoka kenritsu bijutsukan kiyō* 23 (2007), p. 39. By the spring of 1912, Ogawa Sumirō (n.d.) owned the draft handscroll as indicated by surviving correspondence between him and scholars interested in the work. See Yoshizawa, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

16 Shishizaki, *op. cit.* (1917), p. 202 and Shishizaki, *op. cit.* (1920), p. 201.

17 Matsunaga had been a pupil of Itō Tōgai (1670–1736), son of Kyoto's renowned Confucian scholar Itō Jinsai (1627–1705). See Yoshizawa, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Takahashi Munenao also studied with Itō; therefore, it is likely that he and Matsunaga were at the very least acquainted, if not friends, since their youth.

18 The meaning of the final phrase (因題数字なり) is somewhat unclear; the translation is a best guess.

19 Mentioned in the catalogue entry for the *Amusements of the four seasons of Kyoto* in *Maruyama Ōkyo ten: bōgō zoonen kinen*, *op. cit.*, p. 43. The Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired the Burke Collection draft in 2015, following the passing of Mary Griggs Burke in 2012. I thank Stephanie Wada and Gratia 'Sandy' Williams, the long-time curators of the Burke Collection, for allowing me to study the draft in May 2015.

20 Matsuda Masachika/Shōji (1723–88) was listed in the scholar's section of the 1782 *Who's who of Kyoto (Heian jinbutsushi)*. Also, a calligrapher, Matsuda was skilled in the composition of *waka* poetry as well. For a copy of the numerous editions of the *Who's who of Kyoto*, see *Kinsei jinmeiroku shūsei*, vol. 1, *op. cit.* I thank Sayoko Sakakibara for her invaluable assistance with transcribing the inscription and Janice Kanemitsu for her careful checking, as well as editing, of my translation.

21 Wakasa was the name of a province, which now is located in the western part of Fukui prefecture. Takahashi was born into a lower-ranking samurai family who hailed originally from Wakasa.

22 Roberts, J.L., 'Copley's cargo: *Boy with a squirrel* and the dilemma of transit', in: *American art*, vol. 22, no. 2 (summer 2007), pp. 20–41. I thank Miriam Kienle for drawing my attention to this article.

23 Shishizaki, *op. cit.* (1920), p. 201 and Kimura, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

24 Ōkyo had a significant number of students. Although he has been recorded as stating otherwise, part of their training involved copying the master's work. That *Amusements* was deemed worthy of study and copy further indicates the thought and effort expended on the original project by Ōkyo and his patron, the Kujō. For further information about Ōkyo's

students and their work, please consult Sugimoto, Y., 'Maruyama Ōkyo no monjin tachi (Regarding the students of Maruyama Ōkyo)', in: *The students of Maruyama Ōkyo*, Kurokawa Kobunka Kenkyūsho, Nishinomiya City 2014 and Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum, *Maruyama-ha to Mori Kansai — Ōkyo kara Kansai e (The Maruyama school and Kansai Mori — from Ōkyo to Kansai)*, Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum, Yamaguchi Prefecture 1982.

25 Genki dated his copy. For a brief analysis, see Murase, M., *Japanese art: selections from the Mary and Jackson Burke collection*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1975, pp. 225–227 and Murase, M., et al., *Art through a lifetime: the Mary Griggs Burke collection, volume 1: Japanese paintings, printed works, calligraphy*, Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, distributed by the University of Washington Press, New York 2013, p. 323.

26 Imperial Prince Shinnin (1768–1805), another of Ōkyo's high-ranking patrons, regularly noted the artist's visits in order to study paintings either lent to him or in his possession. For example, in a diary entry from the first day of the second lunar month of 1787, the prince recorded, "yesterday morning I arranged to borrow one handscroll containing images of unusual birds. When it arrived, Ōkyo looked at them". Imanaka Kanji, 'Myōhō-in Shinnin Shinnō onjiki nikki ni arawareta shasei ha eshitachi (Shasei painters who appear in Imperial Prince Shinnin of Myōhō-in's diary)', in: *Bungaku-Nenpō* 23/24 (March 1975), p. 2.

27 *Scenes in and out of the capital* screens have been well studied by scholars in Japan and beyond. A recent Japanese exhibition catalogue includes scholarly essays and numerous colour reproductions: *Kyoto: rakuchū rakugai zu to shōhekiga no bi: tokubetsuten (Kyoto from inside and outside: scenes on panels and folding screens, a special exhibition)*, Nihon Terebi, Tokyo 2013. For further information in English, please consult. McKelway, M.P., *Capitalscapes: folding screens and political imagination in late medieval Kyoto*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 2006.

28 Currently in the collection of Daitokuji, Kyoto, the screens are reproduced, among other publications, in *The Museum of Kyoto, Kanō-school and the art world of the first half of the 18th century in Kyoto — special exhibition, September 2004*, The Museum of Kyoto, Kyoto 2004, pp. 46–47.

29 Shirane Haruo, *Japan and the culture of the four seasons*, Columbia University Press, New York 2012. See especially chapter 2, 'Visual culture, classical poetry, and linked verse', pp. 57–88.

30 Cunningham, L., *The spirit of place: Japanese paintings and prints of the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries*, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven 1984), p. 33. *Meisho* originally were also places made famous by poetry or *utamakura*. See Shirane, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–88. New *meisho* with no direct links to poetry began to appear by the 18th century. For a concise history of *meisho* and its links to travel, see Suzuki Hiroyuki, 'Meisho-e to tabi to fūkei (Famous place pictures, travel, and scenic views)', in: *The world of famous place pictures (Meisho-e no sekai)*, Shizuoka Prefectural

Museum, Shizuoka 2007), pp. 6–13. See also Sakomura Tomoko, *Poetry as image: the visual culture of waka in sixteenth century Japan* (Brill, Leiden, Boston 2016), 110.

31 I refer here to Kyoto guidebook illustrations and other printed images of popular locations in the city.

32 These processions occurred every year as part of the alternate attendance system (*sankin kōtai*), in which daimyo and their entourages left their home fiefs to serve the shogun in Edo (present-day Tokyo), returning (also in a procession) after approximately one year of service. During the early modern period, therefore, daimyo spent roughly every other year away from their domains. The spectacle resulting from these samurai marching the highways heading to or away from Edo inspired a number of pictorial representations. For a trenchant study of the cultural impact of the alternate attendance system in English, see Vaporis, C., *Tour of duty: samurai, military service in Edo, and the culture of early modern Japan*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 2008. Timon Screech has termed the elite's (shogun, daimyo, and emperor) assertion of power despite limited physical representation in early modern Japan an 'iconography of absence'. The pictorial evidence from the Tokugawa era supports Screech's assessment. See Screech, T., *The shogun's painted culture: fear and creativity in the Japanese states 1760–1829*, Reaktion, London 2000, p. 112.

33 This circumstance might be explained by the theme of the second scroll, monthly events, which called for close-up views of the participants, rather than the more distant views that paintings featuring famous locations would require.

34 See Kameda-Madar, *op. cit.*

35 These textual and visual depictions of the people of Kyoto at play also may be thought of as 'souvenirs' of the city. See Stewart, S., *On longing: narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection*, Duke University Press, Durham, London 1993, pp. 132–140. Stewart distinguishes between the 'lived experience' of the souvenir's maker and the 'secondhand experience' of the souvenir's possessor/owner, underscoring the longing caused by the knowledge that the 'lived experience' of the maker is forever out of reach in the past. Thus, *Amusements* can be conceived as producing, within the Owari Tokugawa, a desire to experience the represented Kyoto pastimes firsthand.

36 Arashiyama became a site known for cherry blossoms in the 18th century, resulting from the creation of public parks in urban areas. As the art historians Katayama Hiroaki and Okada Hideyuki note, these parks arose due to the 'public welfare' policies of Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751), instigated as part of the 1736 Kyōhō reforms. Cherry trees from the gardens of Edo Castle were transplanted to various locations in outlying areas with the aim of providing the populace with a place to relax, and in springtime, to amble amidst blossoms. Although Yoshimune's actual

motivation was far less altruistic — to create agreeable grounds for his favoured pastime of falconry — the public nonetheless fully embraced the opportunity for pleasure outings in fine weather. Following this example, other cities established similar parks, including Kyoto. Arashiyama's presentation as a spring playground thus could have been read at the time as the positive outcome of Tokugawa rule, as well as an implicit acknowledgement of the intended recipient of *Amusements*, the Owari Tokugawa. Personal communication with Chief Curator Katayama and Curator of Early Modern Japanese Painting Okada of the Miho Museum, Shiga Prefecture, Japan, July 2010. For further information on Tokugawa Yoshimune and the Kyōhō Reforms, see, among others, Kasaya Kazuhiko, *Tokugawa Yoshimune*, Chikuma Shinsho, Tokyo 1995, and Ōishi Manabu, *Tokugawa Yoshimune: Kokka saiken ni idonda shōgun* (*Tokugawa Yoshimune: the shogun who rose to the challenge of rebuilding the nation*), Kyōiku shuppan, Tokyo 2001. The planting of cherry trees as part of the 'public welfare' policies of the reforms are discussed in the *Yūtokuinden gojikkitsuke roku*, vol. 16 of the *Tokugawa jikki* (*Chronicles of the Tokugawa*), vol. 9, *Kokushi taikei* 46, Yoshikawa Kobunkan, Tokyo 1976, pp. 301–302.

37 The three skills are *waka*, calligraphy, and *koto*. Fujiwara Michinaga (966–1027) organised the now-famous outing to the Ōi River, reserving three boats, one for guests skilled in Chinese verse, another for musicians, and one for experts in *waka* or Japanese verse. The renowned poet Fujiwara Kintō (966–1041) was given the honour of choosing his own boat and selected the Japanese poetry vessel. See Craig McCullough, H., *Ōkagami* (*The great mirror*) Princeton University Press, Tokyo University Press, Princeton, Tokyo 1980, pp. 113–114.

38 Another possible reason for Arashiyama's springtime representation relates to the aristocratic nature of the narratives evoked from the autumn images of Arashiyama and particularly, the Ōi River. While one might expect the Kujō family to have welcomed allusions to past emperors' visits to the area, Kujō Naozane's involvement in the Hōreki incident (1758–1759), which resulted in five courtiers facing punishment at the hands of the Tokugawa government (for perceived anti-shogunate studies), as well as the Owari Tokugawa's prior feud with the ruling branch of the Tokugawa family, suggest that both parties would have been cautious about any direct reference to imperial privilege. For a discussion of the Hōreki incident, see Tsuji, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–221 and Kyoto-shi, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–34.

39 Popular, late 17th century guidebooks include *Kyō warabe* (*Child of the capital*) of 1658, *Kyō suzume* (*Sparrows of the capital*) of 1665, and *Kyō miyage* (*Souvenirs of the capital*) of 1677. 18th century guidebooks include *Kyō habutae* (*Kyoto brocade*) of 1705, *Kyō habutae taizen* (*Kyoto brocade omnibus*) of 1745, *Mizu no fukiyose* (*A gathering of the wealth of waters*) of 1778, *Miyako meisho zue* (*Illustrated book of the famous places of the capital*) of 1780, and *Shūi miyako meisho zue* (*Gleanings from the illustrated book of the famous*

places of the capital) of 1787. For a general discussion of Tokugawa era guidebooks in English, see Sandler, M., ‘The traveler’s way: illustrated guidebooks of Edo Japan’, in: *Asian art*, vol. 5, no. 2 (spring, 1992), pp. 30–55. Mary Elizabeth Berry analyses the Kyoto brocade and the Kyoto brocade omnibus in *Japan in print: information and nation in the early modern period*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 2006, pp. 139–178.

40 Shōkyū Haseo, *Kyōto no maki I, Nihon meisho fūzoku zue* vol. 7, Kadokawa, Tokyo 1979, p. 57. As Fujita Shin’ichi points out, however, these Kyoto guidebooks perpetuated an error — Retired Emperor Gosaga transplanted Yoshino cherry trees to his estate on Kameyama, not Arashiyama — and aided in increasing Arashiyama’s appeal as a tourist destination. See Fujita Shin’ichi, ‘Buson: haikai asobigokoro (Buson: playful heart of haikai)’, in: *Kindai bungaku kenkyū sōsho* 10, Wakakusa Shobō, Tokyo 1999, p. 228.

41 For rich investigation of 16th and 17th century screen paintings of Yoshino and its famed blossoms, please consult Sakomura, *op. cit.*, pp. 103–150.

42 Known as one of the Four Heavenly Kings of *waka*, Ban Kōkei was also a National Learning (*kokugaku*) scholar and the author of the *Who’s who of Kyoto*. This description of Arashiyama is included in Kōkei’s *Kanden kōhitsu* (*Cultivating the uncultivated*) published in 1799. Quoted in Fujita, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

43 Fujita, *op. cit.*, pp. 231–240. Fujita’s survey of *waka*, *renga*, *haikai*, and *kanshi* on Arashiyama, the Ōi River, and the Saga region is quite broad, and his findings are convincing.

44 Takeuchi, M., ‘The golden link: place, poetry, and paradise in a medieval Japanese design’, in: *Worlds seen and imagined: Japanese screens from the Idemitsu museum of arts* (Kuroda Taizō, M. Takeuchi, and Yamane Yūzo, eds), Asia Society, New York 1995, p. 41.

45 As Fujita Shin’ichi points out, Arashiyama is also connected to the neighbouring famous place of Saga, which encompasses Okurayama, as well as Okurayama’s southeastern region, known as Kameyama. See Fujita, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

46 *Ikuda* or rafts, which are punted along the river by a single man, also serve as signifiers for Arashiyama; however, they do not appear in the representation of Arashiyama in *Amusements*. Such a raft is featured in Ōkyō’s *Autumn view of Arashiyama* (fig. 12).

47 Given Takahashi’s renown, it is possible that he was an invited participant of the excursion that inspired the composition of this poem.

48 The ‘three honoured boats’ (or *san no bune* 三の船) refer to the 986 imperial outing organised by Fujiwara Michinaga (see note 37), which included the famed Fujiwara Kintō, and to the three skills (ability to compose Japanese or *waka* poetry, to write with an elegant hand, and to play musical instruments) that Kintō possessed.

49 Fujiwara Kintō wrote what is likely the best-known poem associated with Arashiyama. The verse appears in the *Shūi wakashū* (*Collection of gleanings*, ca. 1005) for which Kintō served as the compiler, and also in the *Kintōshū* (*Collection of Kintō*), containing 560 examples of his work:

<i>Asa mada ki</i>	From early morning,
<i>arashi no yama no</i>	because the mountain of
	storms/Arashiyama
<i>samukeba</i>	is very chilly,
<i>momiji no kin kinu</i>	the silk of red leaves serves
<i>hito zo naki</i>	as the costume worn by all

In the *Kintōshū*, Kintō explains that the poem was composed during a brief stop at Arashiyama while he and his party were en route to a temple. As they were refreshing themselves, the group became overwhelmed by the brilliance of the falling maple leaves. The poetic imagery suggests that Kintō and his companions found themselves almost clothed with the profusion of bright red leaves blown off the trees by the wind. See *Shui wakashū*, annotations by Komachiya Teruhiko, *Shin Nihon bungaku taikei* 7, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1990, p. 60. The poem was translated with invaluable assistance from Miri Nakamura.

50 *Kokin bokuseki kantei binran* (Mori Senzō, ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 136.

51 Hayashi Kumiko, ‘Shijō kawara no shibai (The Shijō riverbank’s theatre)’, in: *Kyō no Kamo gawa to hashi*, Shibunkaku, Kyoto 2001, p. 180. See also Yokoi Kiyoshi, ‘Seikatsu bunka shi no naka no [shijō kawara] (The Shijō riverbank from the history of the culture of everyday life)’, in: *Shijō kawara, Kinsei fūzoku zufu* 5, Shōgakkan, Tokyo 1983, pp. 92–97 and Kōno Motoaki, ‘Shijō kawara zu no seiritsu to tenkai (The formation and development of the Shijō riverbank image)’, in: *Shijō kawara, Kinsei fūzoku zufu* 5, Shōgakkan, Tokyo 1983, pp. 106–110.

52 Kamada Michitaka, *Kinsei Kyoto no toshi to minshū* (*The city and the people of early modern Kyoto*), Shibunkaku, Kyoto 2000, p. 269. The Gion Festival honours the deity of Yasaka Shrine and is best known for its parade of sacred palanquins.

53 These dates are recorded even in works of contemporary literature. See Hiraga Gennai, *Rootless weeds*, book 4 (*Nenashigusa, yon no kan*, 1763), reprinted in: *Fūrai sanjinshū* (*Hiraga Gennai Collection*), *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 55, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1962), p. 79. See also Kyoto-shi, *op. cit.*, p. 202. The dates given in *Kyoto no rekishi* however are the 7th through the 17th day.

54 Nishōtei Hanzan was the pen name of Kimura Bōun. Hanzan/Bōun was a *kyōka* poet, as well as an author, and a retainer of the Tokugawa government. Nishōtei Hanzan, *Mita miyako monogatari* (*Observations of the imperial capital*), 1781, reprinted in: *Shiryō Kyoto kenbunko*, vol. 2,

Hozokan, Kyoto 1991, p. 73. For further information on Nishōtei Hanzan/Kimura Bōun and for a complete translation of *Mita miyako monogatari*, see Groemer, G., *The land we saw, the times we knew: an anthology of zuihitsu writing from early modern Japan*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 2018, pp. 194–219. This quoted passage, however, was translated by the author.

55 The Tokonatsu or Pink (Royal Tyler’s translation) chapter recounts Genji and companions finding respite from the summer heat in the fishing pavilion at Rokujō, at which refreshments including fish are prepared for them. For a late 17th century pictorialisation, see the detail from the *Genji monogatari zu byōbu* or ‘Screens of scenes from *The tale of Genji*’, in: *The tale of Genji: a Japanese classic illuminated* (Carpenter, J.T., and M. McCormick (eds) with M. Bincsik and Kinoshita Kyoto, preface by Sano Midori) The Metropolitan Museum of Art, distributed by Yale University Press, New York, New Haven and London 2019, pp. 225 and 337.

56 *Cooling*, as well a draft of the painting, is privately owned. The draft was exhibited in the 2003–2004 show, ‘Maruyama Ōkyō: shaseiga — challenging a new frontier, special exhibition’ with a reproduction included in the catalogue, *Maruyama Ōkyō: tokubetsu ten: ‘shaseiga’ — sōzō e no chosen* (*Maruyama Ōkyō: shaseiga — challenging a new frontier, special exhibition*), Mainichi Shinbunsha, Tokyo 2003, pp. 232–233. For a reproduction of the painting, see Mizuo Hiroshi, ‘Maruyama Ōkyō hitsu *Shijō kawara nōryōzu* (Commentary on the *Cooling off by the Shijō riverbank* by Maruyama Ōkyō)’, in: *Kokka*, 830 (1961), pp. 207–215.

57 All background information on *obon* or *uranbon* taken from *Heian jidai gishiki nenjū gyōji jiten* (*Dictionary of the annual events and ceremonies of the Heian period*), (Abe Takeshi, Yoshie Akiko, and Aiso Takashi, eds), Kōsaidō, Tokyo 2003, pp. 144–145.

58 Because *obon* dancing is derived from the Pure Land Buddhist practice of *nenbutsu odori* (dancing while reciting the name of Amida Buddha), the variations are numerous. For example, Tokushima’s Awa-odori, which dates back to the 16th century, has gained considerable fame. Known as the ‘crazy dance’, Awa-odori merits mention in present-day guidebooks of Japan such as Kinoshita, J. and N. Palevsky, *Gateway to Japan*, third edition, Kodansha, Tokyo 1998, p. 106.

59 *Kodansha encyclopedia of Japan*, s.v. ‘Kūya’.

60 Kanō Hiroyuki, *Japanese design in art, part II, motifs of the four seasons 12: annual events*, Kyoto Shoin Co., Kyoto 1995, p. 138.

61 This conclusion is based on my own survey of genre paintings set in winter. Though I have yet to find an example, the pictorial trope in fact may date back to the Heian period (794–1185). In the Bluebell chapter of *The tale of Genji*, “Genji had the page girls go down and roll a snowball.” Murasaki Shikibu, *Tale of Genji*, (Royall Tyler, trans.), Viking, New York 2001, p. 373. Sei Shōnagon (965–1010s?) describes the construction of a ‘snow mountain’ for the amusement of the empress in her *Pillow book*: “I and the other ladies-in-waiting gathered large quantities of snow

and heaped it in lids; then we decided to build a real snow mountain in the garden. Having summoned the servants, we told them it was on Her Majesty’s orders, and so they all got to work”. Sei Shōnagon, *The pillow book of Sei Shōnagon*, (Ivan Morris, trans.), Penguin Books, New York 1983, p. 102.

62 A Momoyama (1573–1603) era example from the folding album *Genre scenes of the twelve months* by an anonymous artist includes a group of thirteen young warriors, quite nattily dressed, racing down a Kyoto street and pushing a large snowball in front of them. Kanō, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

63 Kurokawa Dōyū, *Hinami kiji* (*A book of days*), 1684, reprint, Maeda Shoten, Osaka 1982, p. 482. I thank Sharon Yamamoto for bringing this source to my attention.

64 See McKelway, *op. cit.* (2006), and Kanō, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

65 For a discussion of the Hōreki incident, see Tsuji, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–221 and Kyoto-shi, *op. cit.*, p. 31–34.

66 *Edo jidai zen daimyo-ke jiten*, *op. cit.*, s.v. ‘Owari Tokugawa Muneharu’.



The Japanese Print as a Lens to Understanding Wright's Organic Space: ***The Miegakure Effect***

Kenneth Dahlin

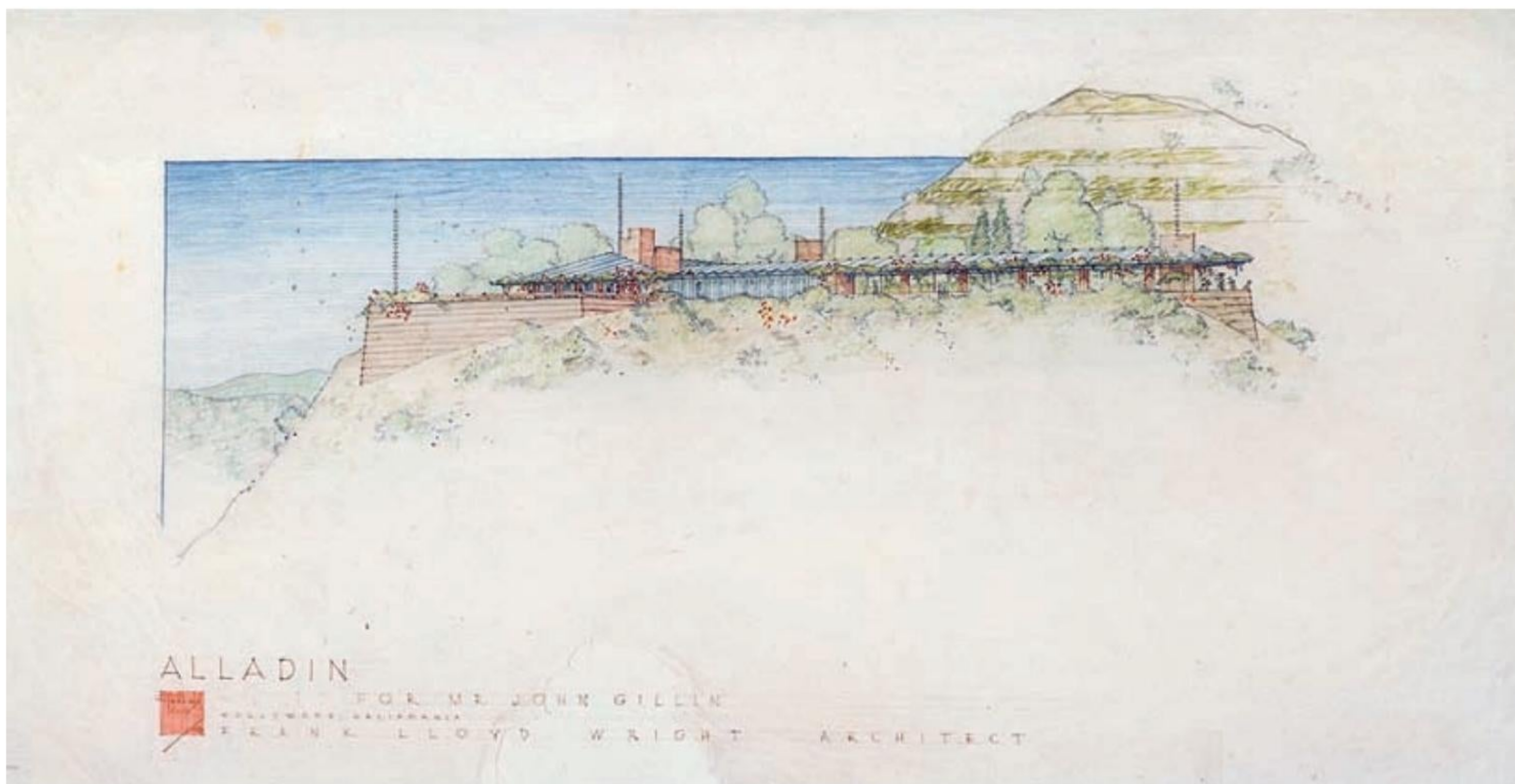
The Japanese woodblock print played a significant role in Frank Lloyd Wright's developing sense of organic architecture. Wright's analysis of the Japanese print reveals clues to his own idea of the organic. Furthermore, the spatial construction of the print is key to understanding the spatial depth Wright claimed for his own architecture and why he felt his organic space was distinct from that of the European Modernist architects of the early twentieth century. This article compares Wright's designs with Edo-period landscape prints, in conjunction with Wright's primary texts, to present this case.

9. (Previous page)
Frank Lloyd Wright,
Bernard Schwartz
house, 1939, Two Rivers,
Wisconsin.

Photo courtesy of George Hall.

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) was fascinated with the “unpretentious” Japanese woodblock print that came to play a significant role in his developing sense of organic architecture.¹ Wright's analysis of the print reveals clues about what he meant by organic space, and about why his version of spatial construction was distinct from that of the European Modernist architects who were claiming their own revolution of space. The spatial construction of the Japanese print is key to understanding the spatial depth in Wright's architecture. I will show this connection both through Wright's primary texts and through a comparison of Wright's architecture with certain landscape prints by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858) and Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849).

Long before his first trip to Japan in 1905 “in pursuit of the print”, Wright was exposed to Japanese art. He wrote of “finding collateral evidence” for the idea of the elimination of the insignificant in the Japanese print when he was 23 years old.² He also wrote of his exposure to the Japanese Ho-o-den pavilion at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago; his passion for Japanese art continued long after his final trip to Japan in 1922. Wright's frame of reference for Japan reflected many of the Western biases of his time, the American and Western Europeans perception of Japan as the distant and romanticised other, viewing subjects in the prints with a near-mythological status. More specifically, Wright shared many of the views of the early American historian of Japanese art, Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), who helped found the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Wright admired Fenollosa's views



1.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Gillin House, 'Alladin', 1950

Copyright © 2021 Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Scottsdale, AZ. All rights reserved. The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Archives (The Museum of Modern Art I Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York)

and wrote in 1917 that he had acquired his first Japanese woodblock prints from him, especially the *hashirakake* (tall and narrow pillar print) format, on one of Fenollosa's visits to the United States.³ However, Kevin Nute has provided evidence of even earlier exposure to Japan, beginning on Wright's first employment in Chicago with Joseph Lyman Silsbee in 1887.⁴ Silsbee was a second cousin to Ernest Fenollosa. It is known that Fenollosa lectured frequently in Chicago and often stayed with his cousin Silsbee on these trips. Fenollosa was active in Chicago again in 1895 before leaving for Japan.⁵

Fenollosa's work with Okakura Tenshin (1863–1913) in Tokyo to restore the appreciation of Japan's own traditional art influenced Wright's own understanding of Japanese art, resulting in Wright's focus on pre-Meiji-era art as a collector and dealer. That Wright, who saw himself as the forerunner of architectural modernism, chose to reject Japan's modern art and instead look to pre-Meiji traditional art underlies his theory of organic architecture and its stance in opposition to the rising avant-garde European Modernism. Fenollosa, who had majored in the idealist philosophy of Hegel

at Harvard before moving to Japan, felt that Japanese art reached beyond the veil of mere appearances in order to convey the universal idea. Fenollosa felt that Japanese art did not aim at realistic representation but aimed through abstracted forms to express a more pure underlying meaning. This tendency to abstraction may reveal Wright's preference for Edo-period prints rather than the later, more naturalistic *shin hanga* (new print) period. Abstraction was necessary to separate out the 'accidental' from the essential, which Wright referred to as the print's 'elimination of the insignificant'. Wright believed the Japanese print had an inner organic integrity that constituted "the fundamental law of beauty".⁶ He also saw in the aesthetic conventions of the Japanese landscape print how the contour line, figure ground, and layered planes produced the perception of three-dimensional space within its two-dimensional medium. Wright would apply this principle to amplify physical three-dimensional architectural space into what he saw as a higher dimension of spatial expression, which he referred to as organic space.

Wright, also an accomplished print dealer, used his prints decoratively to adorn his own homes and as a teaching aid for his students. On various occasions, such as during his print parties, he would present a series of prints and teach his apprentices from them. Later in his life, at a Taliesin print party in 1957, Wright reminisced:

I remember when I first met the Japanese prints. That art had a great influence on my feeling and thinking. Japanese architecture—nothing at all. But when I saw that print and I saw the elimination of the insignificant and simplicity of vision, together with the sense of rhythm and the importance of design, I began to see nature in a totally different way.⁷

Comparison of Rendering Style

A comparison between Edo-period Japanese landscape prints with Wright's own renderings can provide us with an insight into his working methods (figs 1 and 2). In Wright's coloured pencil rendering of the Alladin project (fig. 1), he has broken through the pictorial frame in a manner similar to Hiroshige (fig. 2), opening the space breaking beyond the boundaries of the print. Wright's landscape is primarily a two-dimensional planar construct primarily, much like Hiroshige's landscape, although Wright rendered the building itself in perspective construction. Wright had claimed that Hokusai and Hiroshige exaggerated their proportions of Mount Fuji to be truer to the underlying ideal rather than to present a literalist representation. Although the Gillin house in Dallas Texas sits on a very modest hill, Wright idealised and exaggerated the vertical dimension of the topography for aesthetic effect. Edo-period Japanese artists felt that the expression of the idea was of a higher value than a mere depiction of realism.

The scholar of Japanese art Timon Screech relates what Tani Buncho (1763–1841) wrote to Matsudaira Sadanobu:

I used to have a large number of Western pictures in my collection, but I tend to find them... short on real meaning (*imi*). When you try to appreciate a Western picture on a profound level you always feel there is something lacking.⁸

This thought is congruent with Wright's concept of the elimination of the insignificant. Missing are shade, shadow, and elaborate texture, and anything that could distract from the integrated whole where idea and expression, form, and content merge. Going further than Hiroshige, Wright dissolved the border down to two edges of the sky and his signature red square in the lower-left corner. The rest of the drawing fades onto the background of paper space in a manner closer to the form of traditional Japanese art than to the linear perspective, the window-frame technique of the Western Renaissance that Wright criticised. It is tempting to compare renderings from Wright with *shin hanga* (new print) rather than with Edo-period prints because of the latter's use of Western perspective. However, *shin hanga* generally portrayed a complete and comprehensive framework of linear perspective, as if the scene were traced from a photograph. Wright's rendering style placed the perspective construction of the building within a flat, layered, two-dimensional landscape so that it could not be mistaken for a literal representation of the scene, but rather an abstracted one that better emphasised the 'Idea' of the design. Wright often used the word 'Idea' to reflect his connections with idealist thinkers and writers, including the Transcendentalists Emerson and Thoreau.



2.

Utagawa Hiroshige, Hara:
Mount Fuji in the morning,
from the series *The fifty-
three stations of the Tokaido
road*. c. 1833–34.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

However, Wright aimed at something more than a mere two-dimensional correlation with the Japanese print. As indicated in his comment about the print (quoted previously in this paper), he suggested the woodblock print offered a way of seeing rather than just being something to be looked at—as something to look *through* or *by*. This kind of perception would have a stronger and more lasting effect than stylistic influences alone. The philosopher Robert Schwartz in his article ‘The power of pictures’ makes the claim that pictures “not only shape our perception of the world: they can and do play an important role in making it”.⁹ Schwartz uses the example of Pablo Picasso’s portrait of Gertrude Stein (1905), where Picasso claimed that the portrait would be seen eventually as an accurate representation of Stein even if, in the beginning, it was thought to look nothing like her. Similarly, by his own admission, Wright’s engagement and romance with the Japanese print would shape his own perception of space and nature.

Much of the appeal of Frank Lloyd Wright’s architecture comes from his mastery of spatial articulation, of ‘breaking the box’, and from his ability to conceive of complex, flowing, three-dimensional spaces. Wright’s form of spatial construction is better understood through the lens of the pre-Meiji

era Japanese print than through reductionist Modernist narratives, such as the interior open (so-called ‘universal’) space of Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969). To Wright, International Style architecture, with its free plans and open space, was apparently missing something substantive. Late in Wright’s career, he wrote of European Modernist architecture:

This modern-architecture we see as a negation in two dimensions. An improvement? Yes, but with too little evidence of the depths of the architecture conceived according to Principle, built from inside outward as organism. The tranquil emphasis on space as the reality of the building is mostly missing. To sum up, organic architecture sees the third dimension never as weight or mere thickness, but always as depth. Depth an element of space; the third (or thickness) dimension transformed to a space dimension.¹⁰

The missing element Wright indicated has to do with a certain sense of depth. If European Modernism was missing something spatially, he felt that something was to be found in the Japanese print. At a Taliesin print party in 1950, Wright spoke of the Japanese

print's power both to inform perception and to amplify spatial depth through what he understood as a dimensional transformation:

So here you have a new way of looking at the landscape. And the landscape has never seemed the same to me since I became familiar with the print. You're continually seeing differently; you're seeing, eliminating. You're seeing, arranging. You're seeing, I don't know exactly how to put it. Not in three dimensions, certainly, and yet perhaps that is the element of the third dimension made manifest by two.¹¹

Along with this emergent third dimension in the print, Wright provided further clues to the type of spatial construction he read in them:

Hiroshige did, with a sense of space, very much what we have been doing with it in our architecture. Here you get a sense of tremendous, limitless space. Instead of something confined within a picture.... On what is your attention focused? Nothing!¹²

Here, Wright specifically makes the connection between the spatial construction of the Edo-period print and his own architectural space. What Hiroshige was doing in two-dimensional art, Wright translated into the third dimension, into architectural space. Wright contrasted the idea of Hiroshige's limitless space with Western linear perspective and its fixed and limiting vanishing point. Here, Wright continues his dialogue with his students.

See how simply they get in three planes; they rendered all this sense of distance, there is no lack of perspective here, as you'll notice. They're supposed not to have known perspective. They

knew all they wanted of it — they didn't want much of it. Because perspective introduced an element which was not necessary to their feeling for beauty.¹³

Hiroshige's print (fig. 2) uses a system of layered planes to represent depth without reliance on one- or two-point perspectives. Wright had this to say in *The Japanese print: an interpretation*:

...a picture should be no imitation of anything, no pretended hole in the wall through which you glimpse a story about something.... The message of the Japanese print is to educate us spiritually for all time beyond such banality.¹⁴

Clues from Gestalt Theory

A Gestalt analysis of the flat, layered planes of the Japanese print seems particularly appropriate given that analysis' emphasis on line, plane, contour, and figure-ground, including the explanatory power it provides in correlating three-dimensional perception within a two-dimensional framework. I also apply this method to examples of Wright's own three-dimensional architectural space. Gestalt is the German word for *form* or *shape*; Gestalt is a theory of the mind that maintains that the whole has a reality of its own, independent of the parts, and the idea that vision is not a mechanical recording of elements but rather the apprehension of significant structural patterns. The Gestalt effect is the ability of our minds to generate whole forms when perceiving elemental percepts, such as lines, points, curves, and planes. The perceptual theorist, Rudolf Arnheim (1904–2007), described how three-dimensional perception of space is reduced to a two-dimensional projection on the retina

and then interpreted by the brain. Depth perception follows when two-dimensional contours occlude other figures in the mind's completion of incomplete shapes.¹⁵ The figure-ground relationship is the basis of this layered, or planar, system of perception.¹⁶

As an example, Hiroshige's 'Kiyozumi mountain' print (fig. 3) presents a composition with background, middle ground, and foreground elements with spatial depth produced by what Arnheim refers to as frontal planes and figure-ground relationships. Lacking is the Western system of linear perspective, yet the eye recognises which areas of the print are foreground and background immediately because the contour lines and their associated planes occlude other areas that are perceived to be behind them. Here is Wright's limitless space, as the viewpoint is not constricted to a single focal point as in Western perspective construction. Also evident is what Wright referred to as the elimination of the insignificant. The spatial interplay of the hills is achieved simply with a strong contour line and flat planes of green colour. Even though this print uses *bokashi* (gradation of colours), chiaroscuro, shade, shadow, and texturing are missing. Wright also referred to the skill of the Japanese artist in the art of suggestion—employing minimal

means, such as a careful and poetic contour line, to be the referent for a composition completed in the viewer's imagination.

In addition to Hiroshige, Hokusai was another of Wright's favourite artists. Hokusai, perhaps more so than Hiroshige, exemplified Wright's idea of the Japanese artist who brought out the inner essence of the subject rather than aiming at photographic realism.¹⁷ The eight prints of Hokusai's series, *Shokoku taki meguri* (A tour of Japanese waterfalls) published in 1833, represent a particularly imaginative period in the artist's work when he was in his mid-70s (fig. 4). While the Amida waterfall in this series is better known and is a stronger example of pure symbolic abstraction, the print in figure 4 reveals important spatial connections to be made. These representations of real places are far from literal depictions of the waterfalls, yet they distil significant characteristics from reality.¹⁸ As Wright stated:

The use of color, always in the flat—that is, without chiaroscuro—plays a wonderful but natural part in the production of this art and is responsible for its charm. It is a means grasped and understood as perfectly as the rhythm of form and line, and it is made in its way as significant. It affords a means of emphasising and differentiating the forms themselves, at the same time that it is itself an element of the pattern.¹⁹

The Hokusai print (fig. 4), like the Hiroshige print, is composed of flat planar layers that build up the visual space. These layers themselves are dependent on crisp contour lines and flat colour to depict an overlapping progression of space. This very compressed series of spaces begins at the stylised cloud form (*kumogata*) on the lower left and ascends through the roadside tea houses with their

3.
Utagawa Hiroshige,
Kiyozumi mountain in Awa province, from the series Wrestling matches between mountains and seas. 1858.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



4-

Katsushika Hokusai,
'Tokaido Sakanoshita kiyotaki
Kannon' (The Kannon of the
pure waterfall at Sakanoshita
on the Tokaido road) from
the series *Shokoku taki
meguri* (A tour of waterfalls in
various provinces). 1832.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



intimate spaces revealed under overlapping thatched roofs. The steep trail is momentarily concealed, then exposed with its travellers and is finally fully revealed at the apex of the cave and waterfall. This print is particularly evocative of the strongly layered and spatially intimate type of spaces for which Wright is best known.

Wright's depiction of the hall, dining room and gallery at the Dana house (fig. 5) built in Springfield, IL, in 1902 is indicative of this type of space. Wright chose to show this space not from the formal and symmetrically located viewpoint from within it but from just outside of it, from which additional spatial layering and depth are perceived. The entrance to these three spaces is framed by the entrance steps and by the surrounding doorway, including the vertical sculpture by sculptor Richard Bock arising above the brick half-wall. This entrance forces a view down then up to spaces partially occluded by architectural elements defining the spatial planes. The prominent central location of the nearer balcony in the rendering is

inexplicable except as an occlusion device to divert one's view both downward and upward to more important spaces that are largely hidden from view. This device has the effect of setting up a dynamic progression through space and reinforces the idea of a continuity of interconnected spaces rather than of a classical partitioning.

Spatial Character Analysed

Common to Hokusai's 'Kannon waterfall', the Dana house, and most of Wright's buildings is the progression of space through a form of concealing and revealing. A Japanese term for this concealing and revealing is *miegakure*. Occluding planes create invisible areas, which are revealed on progression through the space. This revelation occurs in a physical, three-dimensional space, but it can be implied in a two-dimensional print. There is a simultaneous, partial revealing and hiding of elements and spaces, which intentionally leads the eye dynamically through the print's space. This effect can also be seen in the following examples by Hiroshige, in which one can recognise the layered planes and occlusion of spaces (figs 6 and 7).

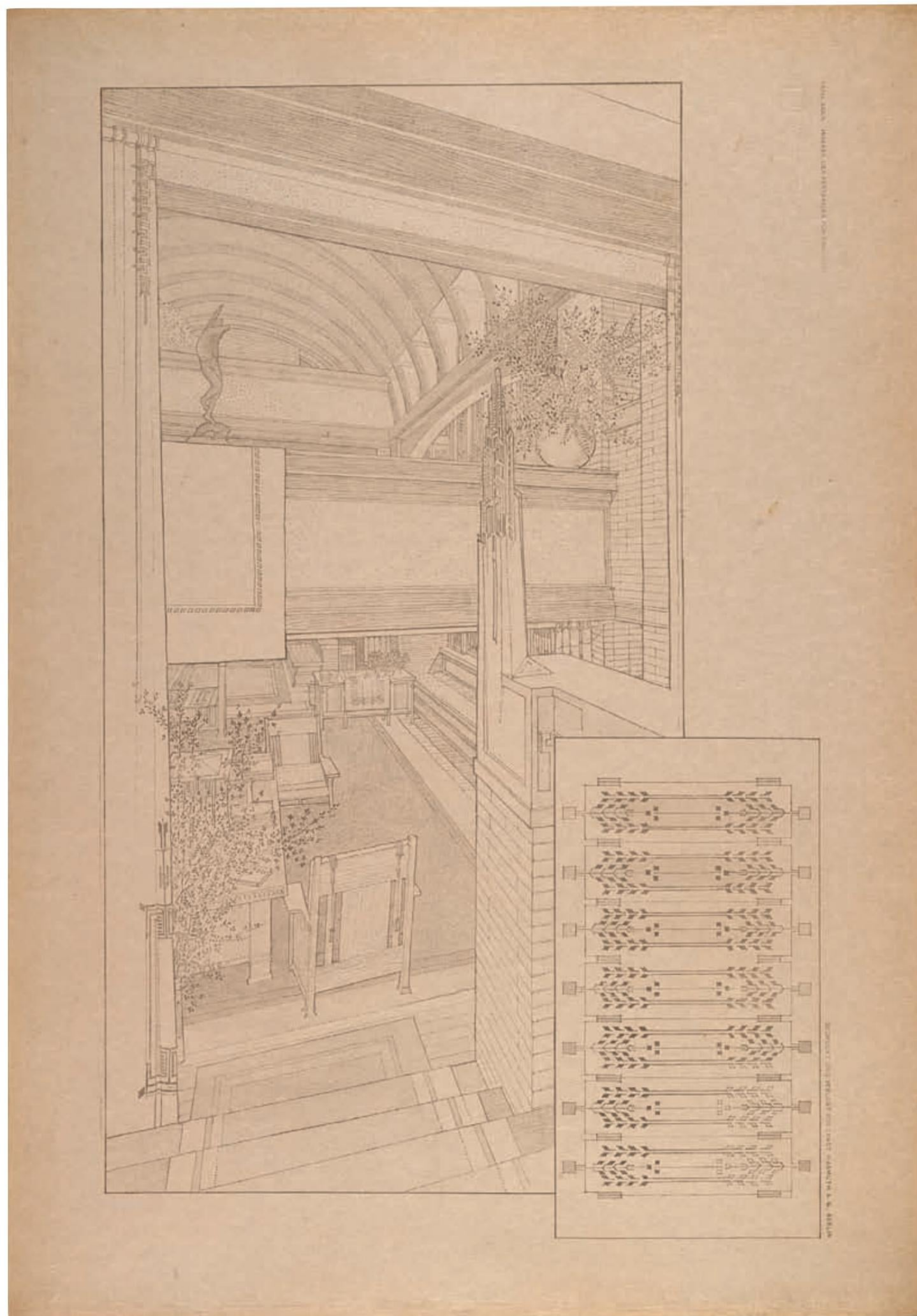
Arrows show a diagram of *miegakure* — the zig-zag pattern of spatial revealing — which are highlighted in figure 8. I will turn now to the concept of *miegakure*, and Wright's perception and use of this Japanese means of describing depth of space in his design for the Schwartz house.

The Bernard Schwartz home is one of Wright's Usonian style homes built in Two Rivers, Wisconsin (fig. 9, see page 31). Wright used the word *Usonian* to refer to the United States instead of the word *American*, and to his homes designed from about 1937 onward which were his New World expression of an indigenous organic architecture. These homes typically eliminated the basement and attic, provided carports instead of garages, had

5.

Frank Lloyd Wright,
Rendering of the hall and
gallery at the Susan Dana
Lawrence home for the
Wasmuth portfolio, 1910.

The Frank Lloyd Wright
Foundation Archives (The
Museum of Modern Art | Avery
Architectural & Fine Arts Library,
Columbia University, New York)





6.
Utagawa Hiroshige: 'Mt.
Arima in Settsu Province.
No. 16' from the series
*Mountains and seas in a
wrestling tournament*. 1858.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

flat or low-pitched roofs, and were intended for middle-class budgets. The Usonian era of Wright's work followed after his earlier Prairie style period, most often for wealthy clients, which typically expressed long horizontal lines, hip roofs, more open plans, corner windows, and extensive detail and trim work. While an earlier Prairie-era example would look more stylistically similar to the traditional Japanese home, I have chosen a Usonian example to force a comparison with underlying spatial construction rather than surface similarities. I have applied principles from Rudolf Arnheim to provide additional insight on whether the jump from two dimensions to the third dimension seems viable, as claimed by Wright, and how it is achieved.

The photo in figure 11 is taken from the Schwartz house entry foyer looking down into the living room and sanctum area (see fig. 10 for reference). This view reveals the largest interior expanse of the interior of the house from one single viewpoint. In figure 12, I overlaid coloured planar elements to emphasise the principle of flat planes in occlusion. Despite the one-point perspective evident here, Wright introduced interruptions to the linear progression using planar elements perpendicular to the line

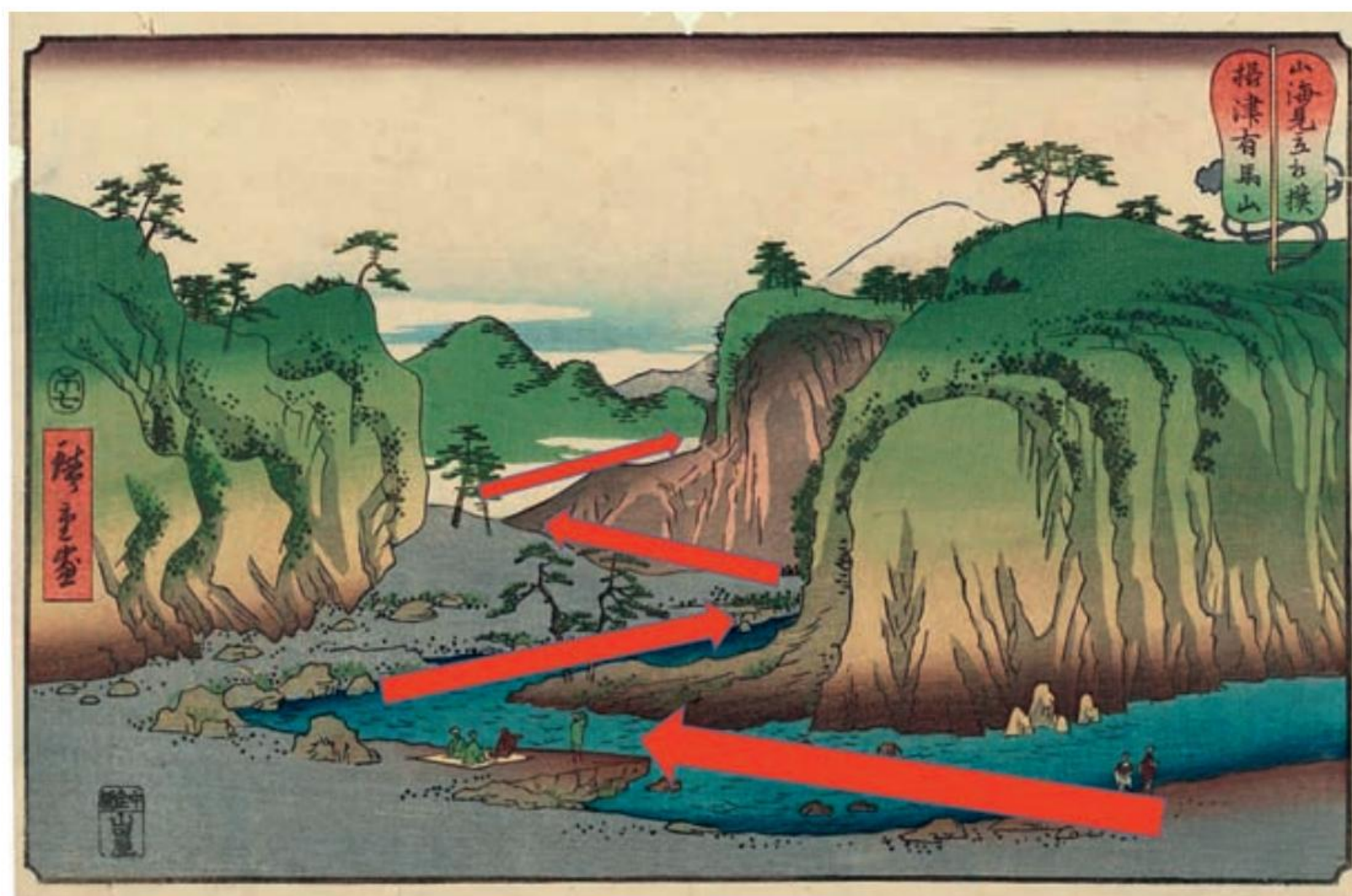
of vision, which produce an enhanced depth effect through figure to ground relationships and planar overlap. In fact, these work independently of any linear perspective so that the Gestalt effects amplify the sense of depth. While Wright stated that Japanese artists had no need for linear perspective, he also knew that they often introduced elements of this perspective in later Edo-period landscapes. An example of this strategy is seen in the Surugacho print by Hiroshige (fig. 13), where strong foreshortening and linear perspective in the merchant street give way to the flat planar spatial construction of the clouded Mount Fuji, the print's symbolic centre. The artists creating these types of hybrid prints do not appear concerned with the lack of unified perspective construction throughout the entire image, revealing the priority given to artistic and symbolic effect.

In the Schwartz house, planar overlap occurs not only with the use of vertical brick piers but also through the low overhead cypress ceiling in the foyer that gives way to the higher plane of the raised living room ceiling (figs 11 and 12). This change in level, characteristic of Wright's compression and expansion of space, serves to occlude a portion of the higher plane and thus accentuate the depth effect between the two ceiling planes.



7.
Coloured layers added by the author to define planes in Utagawa Hiroshige: 'Mt. Arima in Settsu province. No. 16' from the series *Mountains and seas in a wrestling tournament*. 1858.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



8.
Arrows indicating *miegakure* added by the author to Utagawa Hiroshige: 'Mt. Arima in Settsu province. No. 16' from the series *Mountains and seas in a wrestling tournament*. 1858.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

This is particularly effective in Wright's buildings, even when the actual difference in ceiling height is minimal.

Although Wright created areas of spatial occlusion in the Schwartz house, the subdivided space retains its continuity. From the vantage point of the foyer, one can see the main living room, with a glimpse of the dining space to the right just beyond the brick pier at the stair, and a partial view of the sanctum at the far end. Ironically, even though the home has an abundance of glass connecting it to the garden, due to this occlusion, very little can be seen from this primary view. Light washes into the space from behind the brick planes, hinting at exterior space without actually revealing it. The space is

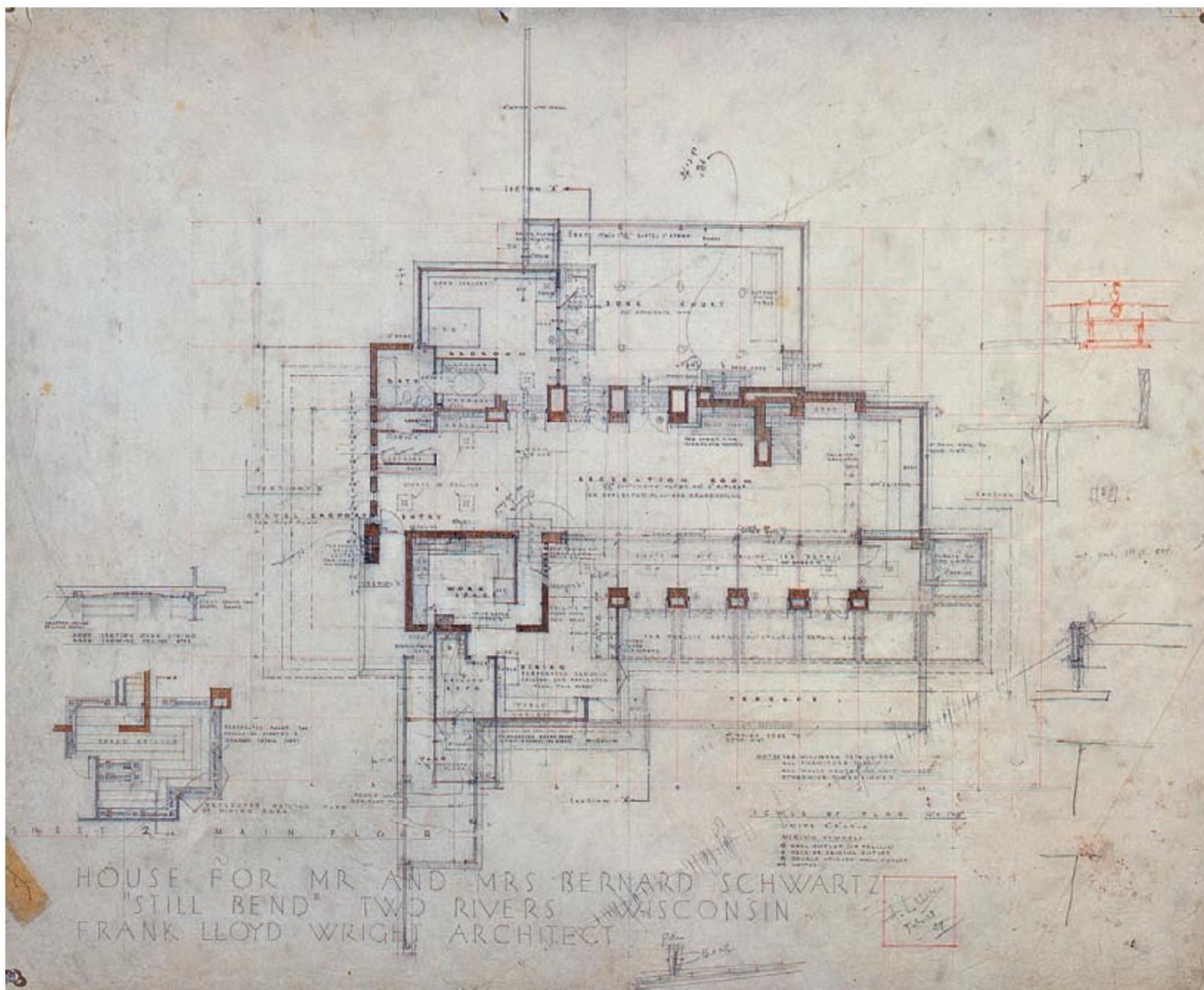
designed to be experienced as a sequential progression, revealing itself as brick piers and walls give way to otherwise hidden views onto the outside gardens. Compare this (fig. 14) with the Mt. Arima print (fig. 8) for a similar expression of *miegakure*. The sense of depth is enhanced, a depth within an interconnected, continuous space. While the style of architecture here has changed, the spatial construction is similar to the style of the Dana house, discussed above.

While the Schwartz house is not overtly Japanese in styling, underlying structures of spatial composition, including the notion of hiding and revealing are similar to those of the Japanese landscape prints. The Japanese print produced depth effects in two dimensions

without reliance on linear perspective. Wright utilised this principle in three-dimensional architectural space using framing elements, contour lines, and occlusion planes that amplified the experience of depth in his architecture. At the same time, these design techniques heightened the sequentially concealed and revealed spaces that invite and draw the participant in and through his architecture, through the *miegakure* effect. While Wright's architectural styles and geometric ordering systems varied widely throughout his long career, this characteristic manipulation of space can be seen throughout his work, whether residential or commercial. This characteristic manipulation also addresses the originality of Wright's space—Wright claimed that his organic space was different from European architects' modern space.²⁰ To Wright the architects' work lacked a certain depth of space, even though they emphasised open space. Their open, universal

space, which Wright referred to as negation, lacked the necessary depth cues created by architectural framing elements strategically arranged to differentiate space and amplify the sense of depth. If the two-dimensional print could create a sense of three-dimensional space, how would one describe a three-dimensional space thus amplified? Wright seemed to be struggling to express this concept as he stated:

Today, around the circumference of architectural thought, basic error still exists concerning the new concept I have stated of the good old third dimension—usually seen as thickness, weight, a solid. Sublimated by organic architecture, it is interpreted as depth. The depth-dimension—really a fourth now—the sense of space.... Witness organic architecture²¹



10.

Frank Lloyd Wright, *Life*
house, 1939, Floor plan.

Copyright © 2021 Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Scottsdale, AZ. All rights reserved. The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Archives (The Museum of Modern Art I Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York)

Whilst Wright was not always precise in his language, he described his organic space as transcending the third dimension into the fourth, which parallels the idea of the way the print, drawn in the second dimension, could create a sense of the third dimension. While the language of this fourth dimension seems more metaphorical or analogical than geometrical, Wright was clearly trying to express a certain quality of three-dimensional, inhabitable space distinguished from more ordinary or non-organic space. Were it not for the fact that Wright explicitly distinguished his form of space from the European Modernists, it would be easy to mistake Wright's organic space as the simple destruction of the box and the consequent creation of an open continuous space—something both Wright and the Modernists share. Wright's spatial construction did not simply seek the open, reductive space of Modernism but an inner depth of space that he claimed Modernism lacked, space that needed definition through layering, boundaries, and framing. This spatial framing, also present in the Edo-period Japanese print, has become a signature of Wright's conception of space. Wright not only stated his kinship with the Japanese print, but both his drawings and his built architectural spaces reveal a common use of layered, occluded, and framed spaces that add depth and richness to his organic architecture, learned not from his Modernist contemporaries but through traditional Japanese art.



11.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Bernard Schwartz house, living room seen from foyer.

Photo by author.



12.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Bernard Schwartz house, planar overlay.

Photo by author.



14.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Bernard Schwartz house, spatial sequence overlay

Photo by author.

13.

Utagawa Hiroshige,
'Surugacho, no. 8' from the
series *One hundred views of*
famous places in Edo. 1856.

Chazen Museum of Art, University
of Wisconsin-Madison, Bequest of
John H. Van Vleck, 1980.1586



NOTES

- ¹ Wright, F.L. *The Japanese print: an interpretation*, Horizon Press, New York 1967, p. 13. Originally published in 1912. His full quote is, “The unpretentious colored woodcut of Japan, a thing of significant graven lines on delicate paper which has kissed the color from carved and variously tinted wooden blocks, is helpful in the practice of the fine arts and may be construed with profit in other life concerns as great. It is a lesson especially valuable to the West, because, in order to comprehend it at all, we must take a viewpoint unfamiliar to us as a people, and in particular to our artists—the purely aesthetic viewpoint”. Wright then describes this art as a thoroughly structural art and says that the beginning of structure is geometry. Structure here is defined by Wright as an organic form in a very definite matter of parts formed into a larger unity. This resulting ‘pure form’ builds the Idea of the thing, which is an architectural principle, he states.
- ² Wright, *op. cit.* (1967), p. 91. Wright was often not very accurate in his recollection of dates. There is the added issue of him using his claimed birth year of 1869 instead of his actual birth year of 1867. Thus, this would bring his exposure to 1890 or 1892. In this text, he also states that his first trip to Japan was “in pursuit of the print”.
- ³ Wright, F.L. and B.B. Pfeiffer, ‘The print and the Renaissance’, in: *Collected writings*, vol. 1, Rizzoli, New York & Scottsdale 1992, p. 149. Here Wright tells of this first exposure to the print and Fenollosa as being “about 25 years” prior to this writing in 1917. This would bring the date to about 1892. If this date is true, then Fenollosa would have been residing in Boston at the time, employed at the Museum of Fine Arts.
- ⁴ Nute, K., *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan: The role of traditional Japanese art and architecture in the work of Frank Lloyd Wright*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York 1993, p. 22.
- ⁵ Additional evidence of this connection is found through Frederick Gookin (1853–1936), a well-known collector of Japanese prints and also a friend of Wright. Gookin was associated with Ernest Fenollosa, Edward Morse, John La Large, and other notable scholars, and collectors of Japanese art.
- ⁶ Wright, *op. cit.* (1967), p. 28.
- ⁷ Meech, J., *Frank Lloyd Wright and the art of Japan: The architect’s other passion*. Japan Society and Harry N. Abrams, New York 2001, p. 21.
- ⁸ Screech, T., ‘The meaning of Western perspective in Edo popular culture’, in: *Archives of Asian art*, vol. 47, 1994, p. 60.
- ⁹ Schwartz, R., ‘The power of pictures’, in: *Journal of philosophy*, vol. 82, 1985, pp. 711–720.
- ¹⁰ Wright, F.L., *A Testament*, Horizon Press, New York 1957, p. 130.
- ¹¹ Unpublished transcript of Japanese print party at Taliesin, September 20, 1950. CR.7, ‘Frank Lloyd Wright at showing of Japanese prints’, p. 7. (Courtesy of Margo Stipe, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation).
- ¹² Meech-Pekarik, J., ‘Frank Lloyd Wright and Japanese prints’, in: *The metropolitan museum of art bulletin*, new series, vol. 40, no. 2, Autumn 1982, p. 47.
- ¹³ Unpublished transcript of Japanese print party, *op. cit.*, (1950), p. 10.
- ¹⁴ Wright, *op. cit.* (1967), p. 32.
- ¹⁵ Arnheim, R., *Art and visual perception: a psychology of the creative eye*. University of California Press, Berkeley 1974, pp. 247–248. Here, Arnheim states that all of our three-dimensional perception of space is ultimately reduced into a “two-dimensional projection on the retina. This does not mean that visual experience is primarily two-dimensional. The basic principle of depth perception derives from the law of simplicity and indicates that a pattern will appear three-dimensional when it can be seen as the projection of a three-dimensional situation that is structurally simpler than the two-dimensional one. As long as the contours touch or cross but do not interrupt one another the spatial effect is absent or weak. However, when one of the components actually cuts off a part of the other, the perceptual urge to see a superposition becomes compelling because it serves to complete the incomplete shape”.
- ¹⁶ Arnheim, *op. cit.*, p. 248. Arnheim gives a further description of how overlapping planes create depth. “Two-dimensionality as a system of frontal planes is represented in its most elementary form by the figure-ground relation. No more than two planes are considered. One of them has to occupy more space than the other and in fact, has to be boundless; the directly visible part of the other has to be smaller and confined by a rim. One of them lies in front of the other. One is the figure, the other the ground”.
- ¹⁷ Wright saw these two artists as the finest examples of the landscape print genre. Wright provides a further glimpse into his understanding of their work when stating: “Hokusai was the greatest interpreter of the spirit of Japanese life in Japanese landscape; Hiroshige the most truthfully simple presenter of its lineaments and people as he saw and loved them.... The one was a great artist in his handling of “nature”; the other a simple poet satisfied to present it as he felt it. Both were valuable cultural assets beyond anything of a similar nature elsewhere in the world. Both were native sons preserving a record of a vanishing world within this world which they loved and understood, and which by the narrow margin of their work alone has appeared before us to teach us our own way forward—at what seems a period of chaos, of mere photographic ideas of form leading nowhere.” Wright, *op. cit.* (1967), pp. 86–87.
- ¹⁸ In this series by Hokusai, the least representative depiction by Hokusai is the Ono waterfall on the Kiso Road. Hokusai may not have visited the waterfall in person and possibly relied on a tourist guide.
- ¹⁹ Wright, *op. cit.* (1967), p. 24.
- ²⁰ Wright, *op. cit.* (1967), p. 130.
- ²¹ Pfeiffer, B.B., *The essential Frank Lloyd Wright: critical writings on architecture*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2008, p. 408.

His Master's Voice

André Kraayenga

Copying and adapting the designs of other artists was common among Japanese print artists. This article contributes to this theme regarding Utagawa Yoshiiku, one of the leading print masters in the transition years from the Edo to the Meiji period. His popular series *Imayo nazorae Genji* is extensively based on the work of his teacher Utagawa Kuniyoshi. This inspiration varies from the concept and overall layout of the prints to the reuse of certain compositions and copying of fragments and details. Six of the *Genji-e* are discussed in detail, providing a detailed insight into Yoshiiku's handling of his visual sources.

The art of the Japanese print master Utagawa Yoshiiku (1833–1904) originated in the closing years of the Edo period (1603–1868) and lasted for most of the Meiji era (1868–1912). During this time Japan changed in significant ways. After centuries of relative isolation, the country opened to the outside world, which led to rapid modernisation, and, in many respects, Westernisation. Like other print artists, Yoshiiku began to add steamships, Western foreigners, and other new subjects to his designs, combined with strong, vibrant colour effects. Much of his work, however, still reflects the traditions of the Utagawa school, as established by the artists of the previous generations. He was a pupil of Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861), as can be clearly seen in his well-known series *Taiheiki eiyuden* (*Heroes of the Taiheiki*) from 1867, a portrayal of famous historical warriors. This article analyses one of his other fine series from the 1860s, *Imayo nazorae Genji* (*Modern comparisons of Genji*), which stands out in terms of its composition, colour, and detailing, and which also relates closely to Kuniyoshi's legacy. It reveals new insights about Yoshiiku's dependence on his master and the extent to which this has affected the conception and execution of his prints. This adds to the increasing interest of recent years in this relatively unknown artist

Modern comparisons of Genji was published in 1863–1864 by Ōmiya Kyūjirō (act. 1855–c. 1904) and consists of 54 woodcuts and a title page. For this series, Yoshiiku collaborated with Miyagi Gengyo (1817–1880), a self-taught artist who was closely connected to the Utagawa school. Works of the series can be found in art collections around the world. A complete set is kept in the collection of the Waseda University Library in Tokyo. The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston owns over 40 prints, donated by the prominent American collector William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926). In 2018, 35 prints from the Italian collection Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna

were showcased at a Yoshiiku exhibition in the Museum of Palazzo Poggi in Bologna. The beautiful accompanying catalogue, with an introductory essay about the artist and descriptive entries on every print, is the starting point for this article. I will focus on the relationship between *Modern comparisons of Genji* and two Kuniyoshi print series, *Genji kumo ukiyo-e awase* (*Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji*) and *Chūkō meiyo kijin den* (*Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue*). The first comprises 54 single-sheet prints and six supplementary designs, published in 1845–1846 by Iseya Ichibei (act. c. 1850), the latter 18 single-sheet prints published about 1845 by Iseya Ichibei and Enshūya Matabei (c. 1768–1881).¹ I will also briefly discuss *Kuniyoshi zatsuga shu* (*Collection of miscellaneous drawings by Kuniyoshi*), a book dated 1856 that also served as a source of inspiration for *Modern comparisons of Genji*.²

Alessandro Guidi (University of Bologna) states in the introductory essay of the Bologna catalogue that Yoshiiku's prints of the 1860s show an 'eclectic talent' that "borrowed a bit of compositional creativity and imagination from his master".³ He hints at the similarity between *Modern comparisons of Genji* and Kuniyoshi's *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji*. This similarity had also been pointed out by Pilar Cabañas (Complutense University of Madrid) in her book on Yoshiiku's *Taiheiki* series, and by Sarah Thompson (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) in an essay on early modern *Genji* pictures.⁴ My study uncovers several clear examples of Yoshiiku's 'borrowing of creativity and imagination' from the various sources for his *Modern comparisons of Genji*, as well as some instances of sheer copying.

Yoshiiku grew up in Asakusa, a temple and thriving entertainment district on the northeast side of Edo, where his father operated a teahouse. This implies that the

young artist was early on, quite familiar with the city's various diversions (kabuki, pleasure quarters, teahouses) and the printmaking industry. He appeared to be fond of painting and was apprenticed to Kuniyoshi when he was about 17 years old. Japanese artists were trained to work in the style of their master and copying was part of that. In later years this continued with the re-use, or adaptation, of earlier designs as well as copying from other artists. In 2018 the readers of *Andon* were presented with a richly illustrated article about this 'copy-paste' tradition by the collector Robert Schaap, who concluded that future research could lead to many more examples.⁵ My article intends to be a follow up on this regarding Yoshiiku.

Yoshiiku's first known work dates from the early 1850s when he contributed several of the background insets to the prints of Kuniyoshi's series *Sankai medetai zue* (*Auspicious desires on land and sea*). These inset designs illustrate the production of regional products in Japan. One of his fellow students in his master's studio was Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892), today regarded as one of the most outstanding print designers of the Meiji period. Yoshitoshi was six years younger and would become his biggest rival. Kuniyoshi one day commented on this by saying that if Yoshiiku would have only half of Yoshitoshi's vigour, he would be the best *ukiyo-e* master of his time.⁶ With series and single prints of beautiful women (*bijin-ga*), warriors (*musha-e*) and actors (*yakusha-e*), both artists focused on the most practised genres of the time. In terms of style, however, Yoshitoshi started to create variations on the prevailing canon and developed his own mode of representation, while Yoshiiku remained close to the style of his master. The 1860s and early 1870s were Yoshiiku's most prolific years. Other than *Modern comparisons of Genji* and *Heroes of the Taiheiki*, important works dating from this period are *Makoto no tsuki hana no sugata-e*

(*Portraits as true likenesses in the moonlight*), a series of popular kabuki actors in silhouetted profile, and *Eimei nijūhasshuku* (*Twenty-eight famous murders with verse*), pictures of bloody murder scenes carried out in collaboration with Yoshitoshi, both dating from 1867. Fine series from the early Meiji years are *Shunshoku sanjūroku kaiseki* (*Colours of spring at thirty-six restaurants*) from 1869, a variant of the then-popular theme of beauties in restaurants, and *Tatsumi no hana zensei kurabe* (*Comparison of the flowers of Fukagawa at the height of their beauty*) from 1871, which shows famous courtesans at the Fukagawa pleasure district. Another notable work is *Haiyu shashin kyo* (*Mirror of photographs of actors*), a series from 1870 that attempts to imitate the then-new medium of photography in woodblock printing. Yoshiiku also made humoristic and satirical prints and illustrated newspaper articles and books.⁷ Besides the exhibition in Bologna, the growing interest in his work in recent years led to an exhibition at the Ōta Memorial Museum of Art in Tokyo in 2018.⁸

General features of the prints

Modern comparisons of Genji and Kuniyoshi's *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji* refer in their titles to the *Genji monogatari* (*The tale of Genji*), the classic of Japanese literature about the amorous adventures of the fictitious prince Genji, written by Murasaki Shikibu (c.978–c.1014). This book, and its parody *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji* (*A rustic Genji by a fraudulent Murasaki*) by Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783–1842), were both extremely popular in 19th century Japan and inspired the production of numerous *Genji* prints (*Genji-e*). These range from simply illustrations of Genji and his 19th century counterpart to scenes with subject matter from other genres, only loosely connected to the *Genji* stories. The *Genji* series by Yoshiiku and Kuniyoshi belong to the latter category. They



are so-called *mitate*, a phenomenon that will be discussed later in this article. The subject was not new to Yoshiiku and may be related to his rivalry with Yoshitoshi. As Andreas Marks (Minneapolis Institute of Art) has shown in his extensive study on *Genji* prints, both artists produced some fine triptychs of this subject in the first half of the 1860s.⁹

Yoshiiku executed the single-sheet polychrome prints (*nishiki-e*) for *Modern comparisons of Genji* on the most common paper size in vertical format (*ōban tate-e*). Across the top, each print has an image of an accordion-folded album (*orihon*), with key information about the link to the *Genji* tale – a type of cartouche widely used in the late Edo period. At the upper right, on the cover of the pictured album, a yellow-coloured cartouche bears the series title inscribed and the number of one of the 54 *Genji* chapters. Except for the print for chapter one, the background of this cartouche

includes two geometric incense crests for the *Genji* chapter (*Genji-mon*), and, in all prints, a pattern of hollyhock (*aoi*) leaves, the same leaf that appears in the emblem of the Tokugawa, the clan whose feudal rule ended in 1868. Inscriptions on the sheets of the accordion album reveal the name of the *Genji* chapter, a poem taken from it and an eye-catching inset design. These were designed by Miyagi Gengyo, the artist who contributed with similar insets also to other prints by Yoshiiku, as well as to the work of some of his contemporaries. The lower part of the prints showcases lively and colourful scenes with figures in various settings. These are men in historical or military outfits, beautifully dressed women, children, and a few animals

The *ōban tate-e* of Kuniyoshi's *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji* use the same ingredients. Apart from the accordion album – here an opened

1. Utagawa Yoshiiku, *Broom tree*, from the series *Modern comparisons of Genji*, 1863/10, *ōban*.

Courtesy Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

2. Utagawa Kuniyoshi, *Early ferns*, from the series *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji*, 1846, *ōban*.

© The Trustees of the British Museum.



handscroll is shown at the top – they contain the series title, the number and name of one of the *Genji* chapters, the poem, a *Genji-mon*, and an illustration in the lower portion of the print. Even the insets are there, although in this case designed by Kuniyoshi himself or by one of the artists from his studio. They differ only with a descriptive text below the handscroll.

All these *Genji* prints show a close interrelation of text and image. Small cartouches in the lower part, adjacent to the figures, are inscribed with the name of a person. These are the key to decipher the print's primary subject, which is taken from Japanese history and legend, other literary work, and popular fiction. In several cases, the names appear in kabuki plays. The Tenpō reforms of the Tokugawa government, issued as edicts in 1842, forbade the depiction of plays and actors. The public at the time, however, was able to identify an actor only by facial

representation. This turns these designs partially into kabuki prints 'in disguise'. The most often portrayed actor in the Kuniyoshi prints is Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII (1832–1854), followed by Nakamura Utaemon IV (1836–1852). The latter is also pictured in the Yoshiiku series.¹⁰

Kuniyoshi's series *Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue* is much easier to decipher. It consists of *ōban* *tate-e* with a rectangular formatted illustration that covers the entire sheet. Like the other two series, these prints present colourful scenes with characters in a variety of roles, set against the background of a landscape or an interior. Cartouches with inscriptions in the right upper corner inform about the series title and the subject depicted, which comes from historical, legendary, or literary sources. Kuniyoshi probably planned more prints for this series, but so far only 18 are known.

3. Utagawa Yoshiiku, *Royal outing*, from the series *Modern comparisons of Genji*, 1863/12, *ōban*.

Courtesy Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

4. Utagawa Kuniyoshi, *Miyamoto Musashi*, from the series *Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue*, c. 1845, *ōban*.

© The Trustees of the British Museum.



Kuniyoshi's designs re-used

The first print of *Modern comparisons of Genji* to be discussed in detail is the design for 2. *Hahakigi (Broom tree)* (fig. 1).¹¹ It is strongly inspired by Kuniyoshi's 48. *Sawarabi (Early ferns)* from *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji* (fig. 2). Both prints use an S-shape composition showing a boy sitting on the foreground and a woman squatting behind him, with both figures gazing in opposite directions. Yoshiiku accentuated the S-form even more by adding a little blue eyed pet dog. His print presents a scene from the play *Koi nyōbō somewake tazuna (The loving wife's particoloured reins)*, a fictional story which was adapted to kabuki in 1751. It illustrates the famous 10th act, *Shigenoi kowakare (The separation of Shigenoi)*. The woman depicted is the lead character Shigenoi, a wet nurse who is looking after



a young princess. The boy is a pack-horse driver called Sankichi, who is Shigenoi's secret son. He helps his mother by encouraging the princess to set out on an important journey. Shigenoi is grateful for this help, but tragically also realises she needs to continue hiding the boy's true identity. Gengyo's inset design shows the leaves of a tree and a brushwood hut. Despite all visual similarities, the Kuniyoshi print tells an entirely different story. It illustrates a scene from the play *Meiboku Sendai hagi (Nikki Danjō and the disputed succession)*. This was based on a failed attempt to assassinate the young heir to the Date clan in the city of Sendai in 1660. It premiered on the kabuki stage, with fictive names and locations, in 1777. The woman depicted in this print is Masaoka, who tends to the heir. The boy is her son Senmatsu, who enjoys some brightly coloured cakes from a large box. The cakes turn out to be poisoned, a wicked lady

5. Utagawa Yoshiiku, *Wisteria leaves*, from the series *Modern comparisons of Genji*, 1864/07, ōban.

Courtesy Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

6. Utagawa Kuniyoshi, *Bell cricket*, from the series *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji*, 1846, ōban.

© The Trustees of the British Museum.



7.
Utagawa Yoshiiku, *Beneath the oak*, from the series *Modern comparisons of Genji*, 1863/10, ōban.

Courtesy Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

8.
Utagawa Kuniyoshi, *Beneath the oak*, from the series *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji*, 1846, ōban.

© The Trustees of the British Museum.

accuses Senmatsu of improper conduct and kills him. Masaoka witnesses the ordeal, but she dutifully chooses to safeguard the heir instead of rescuing her own son.

The second print to be discussed is 29. *Miyuki* (Royal outing), which is partly based on Kuniyoshi's *Miyamoto Musashi* from *Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue* (figs 3 and 4). These designs use a pyramidal arrangement of the visual parts, with long lines applied in the foreground and background to reinforce the compositional effect. In this case, the same story is depicted: a scene from a popular Japanese folk tale about the duel between two famous swordsmen, Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645) and Kasawara Bokuden (1489–1571). This is an imaginary duel, as Bokuden died 13 years before Musashi was born. As the story goes, young Musashi meets the legendary Bokuden in the mountains during a warrior pilgrimage aimed at improving



his fighting skills. While the old man is cooking him a meal, he attacks him. Musashi is pictured using two swords simultaneously, the fighting method for which he was famous. Bokuden, however, easily parries all Musashi's attacks and subsequently teaches him some unknown fighting tricks. The story was made into the play *Katakiuchi nito no ei-yuki* (A tale of revenge and great courage on two islands). Compared to the Kuniyoshi print, Yoshiiku altered and added details to the interior and to the men's clothes. The most remarkable change is in the way he shows Bokuden defending himself, stamping on one of Musashi's wooden swords with his foot and using one pot lid as a shield. Kuniyoshi pictures him using two pot lids. The inset of the Yoshiiku print entails a tree and part of an ox cart, close to the inset Kuniyoshi has used for print 29 of his *Genji* series.

The third example of a print of *Modern comparisons of Genji* where Yoshiiku borrows



from Kuniyoshi is 33. *Fuji no uraba* (Wisteria leaves) (fig. 5). It portrays the famous Danshichi Kurobei in the play *Natsu matsuri naniwa kagami* (*The summer festival*). This was based on a real event in the city of Sakai in 1697 and premiered at the kabuki theatre in 1745. Set against the festivities of the August festival it tells how the hot-tempered Kurobei kills his cruel and greedy father-in-law. Yoshiiku pictures him standing on an open lattice covered with wisteria, while he fights off two attackers. The red loincloth, chequered kimono and long loose hair are well-known characteristics of this role. The facial make-up (*kumadori*) is meant to accentuate the facial musculature. Caution is required with kabuki subjects. Kabuki is a highly stylised art form with predetermined conventions about a pose, which implies that a similar pose seen on different prints is not necessarily a copy. The posture of the highly expressive Kurobei



in Yoshiiku's print, however, is clearly based on Kuniyoshi's 38. *Suzumushi* (*Bell cricket*) (fig. 6). This print portrays Fukuoka Mitsugi in the play *Ise ondo koi no netaba* (*The Ise dances and love's dull blade*), which was also based on real events, that occurred in the town of Furuichi in 1796. It premiered as a kabuki play in the very same year. The intricate plot involves many people and a magic sword that can't be sheathed before it is used to kill. Kuniyoshi pictured the stunning last act, with Mitsugi waving the sword and attacking people at random. In order to capture the tension of the scene, he uses a strongly diagonal composition and a slightly mannered style, with the figures in unusual poses, their limbs swinging in all directions. This dynamic mode of representation also inspired Yoshiiku. One of the legs of the man tumbling through the air behind Kurobei is a copy of the upward-pointing leg of the figure on the right in the

9. Utagawa Yoshiiku, *Writing practice*, from the series *Modern comparisons of Genji*, 1864/04, *ōban*.

Courtesy Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

10. Utagawa Kuniyoshi, *Ono no Tōfū*, from the series *Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue*, c. 1845, *ōban*.

Image courtesy of Japanese Prints-London.

master's print. Another common feature of both designs is the use of lanterns to frame the figures. In the Kuniyoshi print, these belong to the pleasure house where the scene is situated, in Yoshiiku's print they refer to the festivities of the August festival. The inset design of the Yoshiiku print shows a folded piece of paper and some leaves of the wisteria. The fourth print to be discussed is Yoshiiku's design for 46. *Shiigamoto (Beneath the oak)* (fig. 7). It is based on Kuniyoshi's woodcut for the same chapter, with the same title, from *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji* (fig. 8). Both prints use an L-shape design with a bowing man in the centre, his right arm stretched to pick something off the ground. An elegantly dressed lady and the trunk of a tree create the vertical axis of the composition. Compared to the Kuniyoshi design only the child is missing in Yoshiiku's print. Despite the visual similarities, it is about the illustration of a different story. Yoshiiku pictures the warrior-poet Genzanmi Yorimasa (1106–1180), dressed as a nobleman with a tall courtier's hat and luxurious pants. It illustrates one of Yorimasa's poems that alludes to his frustration about his low rank among the Heian court elite. Not being able to 'climb the tree', crawling around it 'to collect the sweet acorns' is all that is left to him.¹² The Kuniyoshi print is a scene from the historical play *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (*Yoshitsune and the thousand cherry trees*) from 1748. This relates to the aftermath of the war between the Taira and Minamoto clans, the Taira being defeated and on the run. Arguably the most dramatic scene is the suicide of the Taira general Tomomori, who ties himself to an anchor and leaps from a cliff. Both Yoshiiku and Kuniyoshi incorporated this famous scene in their *Genji* series as well, albeit for different chapters.¹³ *Beneath the oak* illustrates a scene from the third act of the play, about the beauty Wakabe Naishi, who, accompanied by her son Rokudai, is looking for her fugitive husband.

Mother and child shelter under the spreading branches of a tree where they are joined by a man in travelling clothes, who tries to take advantage of them. Holding a straw hat in front of him and a pipe between his teeth, he is collecting nuts from the tree, which he offers to the boy. Rokudai watches him eagerly, his hand already full of nuts. Yoshiiku paid close attention to the details. The tree pictured by Kuniyoshi, in concordance with the play, is a Japanese stone oak with edible nuts. Yoshiiku pictures Yorimasa next to an oak with a different type of acorn.

The last print to be discussed is 53. *Tenarai (Writing practice)* (fig. 9). It is inspired by Kuniyoshi's *Ono no Tōfū* from the series *Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue* (fig. 10). The historical Ono no Tōfū (894–966) was a poet, court calligrapher and statesman. A well-known fable about him tells how, one day, while taking a stroll near a stream in the rain, he notices a frog trying to jump onto a branch of a weeping willow tree. The determined frog succeeds only after failing many times. In 1754 the story was turned into a play, with an extended and altered plot, called *Ono no Tōfū aoyagi suzuri* (*Ono no Tōfū, the inkstone, and the green willow tree*). It premiered at the kabuki theatre one year later and presents Ono no Tōfū as an illiterate who is forced to write a pledge of allegiance because his brother is having an affair with a court princess, which is seen as part of a coup against the government. Thanks to the vigorous prayers of the woman who once nursed him, he is miraculously able to compose characters, which is the beginning of his writing. The lesson learned by observing the frog is that perseverance always pays off. It is possible that Yoshiiku portrayed the actor Bandō Hikosaburō V in his print (1832–1877), who took on the role of Ono no Tōfū at Edo's Nakamura Theatre in 1863. Yoshiiku also designed a triptych of this play.¹⁴ As in the Kuniyoshi design, Ono no Tōfū is depicted on

one side of the composition, almost filling the space, while the diminutive frog, many times smaller, is shown on the other side, under the tree. The poet's posture, his head slightly bent, as well as the yellow umbrella and the sleeves of his kimono, are directly copied from his teacher's print.

The Genji link

Imayo nazorae in the title of the Yoshiiku series is here translated as 'modern comparisons'. Other translations include 'modern imitations', 'modern parodies' and 'stylish imitations'.¹⁵ The difference can be explained by the complex meaning of *nazorae*, which is close to *mitate*, the phenomenon that has been defined as "surprise comparisons between paralleled sequences of two apparently unrelated categories of things".¹⁶ *Nazorae* seem to lack the playfulness of *mitate*.¹⁷ To unravel the 'comparisons' in the Yoshiiku series, one has to explore the various layers of the prints and uncover the meaning between the depicted subject and the *Genji* link. This should involve the illustration, the inset design, the title, and the poem from the *Genji* chapter. The Ono no Tōfū print, for example, refers to chapter 53, *The writing practice*, of Murasaki's novel. The poem on the print reads:

*Mi o nageshi / namida no kawa no /
hayaki se o shigarami kakete /
dare ka todomeshi.*

Into a torrent of tears / I flung myself
And who put up the sluice /
that held me back?

In the novel, these are the lines composed by princess Ukifune, who feeling torn between two lovers, and had tried to drown herself. She survived but became disoriented and suffered from amnesia. By way of writing practice, she set down the poem. The play *Ono no Tōfū*, the

inkstone, and the green willow tree also mentions a writing practice, which is essential to save Ono no Tōfū's brother. However, it is not clear how the poem connects to this. Andreas Marks has characterised the content of these Yoshiiku prints as "complex iconography linking the *Genji* theme and kabuki".¹⁸ That is something beyond the scope of this article, which mainly deals with visual sources and copying. Except for print 46. *Beneath the oak (Shiigamoto)* (fig. 7), because this print reuses the entire constellation of illustration, title, and poem of Kuniyoshi's design for the same chapter number. One may wonder what in this case the effect at the *nazorae* level of the transition from one series to another is. The poem reads:

*Tachiyoran / kage to tanomi / shii ga moto
munashiki toko ni / nari nikeru kana.*

Beneath the oak / I meant /
to search for shade
Now it has gone / and all is vanity.

In the novel, these are the words of the courtier Kaoru when mourning the death of one of *Genji*'s brothers who had protected him for many years. The tree in the poem on the Kuniyoshi print is also associated with taking shelter, which Wakabe Naishi and her son do in vain. In the Yoshiiku print, the meaning has shifted. As Guidi pointed out, *shii*, in the poem and the title *Shiigamoto*, can have a twofold connotation in Japanese poetry.¹⁹ It may refer to 'acorns', here specifying the type of tree that is featured, and also to 'fourth position', in this case, the court rank in which the poet Yorimasa so vigorously sought to improve. This implies that the emphasis in the Yoshiiku print is on the last part of the poem, "all is vanity", as an ironic commentary on Yorimasa's diligent but hopeless efforts. The inset design, showing a rake and a basket to collect the acorns, underlines this.

Other sources

This search for the visual sources of Yoshiiku's *Modern comparisons of Genji* narrows down to his master's *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji* and *Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue*. The three series all use the vertical ōban format and effectively share the same kind of style. Their content is derived from historical, legendary, and literary sources, and the first of the Kuniyoshi series relates to the *Tale of Genji*. Both Kuniyoshi series comprise a number of prints that have served as a source for Yoshiiku, five of which have been discussed above.²⁰ There are other

sources. The exhibition at the Ōta Memorial Museum of Art pointed out that Yoshiiku's design for chapter 40, *Minori (Rites)* is based on Kuniyoshi's famous triptych *Mongaku Shonin under the waterfall of Nachi* of 1851–1852.²¹ Print 54, *Yume-no-ukihashi (Floating bridge of dreams)* is derived from Kuniyoshi's *Priest Karukaya Doshin and his child Ishidomaru* from 1847–1848.²² Of a slightly different order is Yoshiiku's use of the master's *Kuniyoshi zatsuga shu (Collection of miscellaneous drawings by Kuniyoshi)*. This book, from 1856, consists of scenes from Japanese history and legend which are horizontally formatted and almost monochrome. Parts of these have been reused in prints of *Modern comparisons of Genji*, for example in 3. *Utsusemi*



11.

Utagawa Yoshiiku, *Shell of locust*, from the series *Modern comparisons of Genji*, 1864/09, ōban.

Courtesy Waseda University Library, Tokyo.



(Shell of locust) (figs 11 and 12).²³ This shows a scene from an old folk tale about the samurai Watanabe no Tsuna (953–1025), who fought an infamous female demon and cut off her arm. The demon subsequently disguised herself as Tsuna’s elderly aunt, managed to grab her arm back and escaped. Yoshiiku depicted the spectacular ending of the story, with Tsuna lying on the ground and the demon vanishing into a swirling black cloud. Finally, another artist, besides Kuniyoshi, inspired Yoshiiku. The boy Sankichi in *Broom tree* (fig. 2) is copied from the middle sheet of the triptych *The scene of the Tōkaidō board game* from 1847–1852 by Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1864).²⁴

12.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi, *Collection of miscellaneous drawings by Kuniyoshi*, illustrated book (one volume), 1856, 12 x 18 cm.

© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Concluding remarks

Yoshiiku's borrowing for *Modern comparisons of Genji* varies from inspiration for the overall layout of the prints to the reuse of some compositions and direct copying of fragments and details. He leaned heavily on the work of his master Kuniyoshi. How he proceeded is not exactly clear. Maybe he kept several of Kuniyoshi's prints in his studio, to study their effect and to copy-paste the parts he needed for his own work. Miyagi Gengyo, who was also a poet and a writer and worked with other print artists on similar series, may have been involved in this too. As noted earlier, copying was common among Japanese artists and should not be regarded as plagiarism or an act of weakness. Given the extent to which it occurs in *Modern comparisons of Genji*, however, one might suggest that Yoshiiku found it difficult to design an extended series with dozens of different prints. A more plausible conclusion might be that he was very eager to showcase his ability to extend the traditions of *ukiyo-e* and succeed to the position of his master, who had died two years before he started this series. Other prints from the 1860s, in particular

the *Heroes of the Taiheiki*, may be interpreted in that way as well. This would also explain why he continued to respect the censorship regulations in making *Modern comparisons of Genji*, while at the time, it was completely safe to resume including names of plays and actors. Therefore, Yoshiiku's adjustments made in copying and his individual preferences for which subject fits a certain *Genji* chapter also make sense: as a means of varying, expanding, and commenting on the *Genji* theme in his master's work. Print enthusiasts in Yoshiiku's time were well accustomed looking at pictures as a kind of brain teaser, challenging them to discover all kinds of multiple meanings hidden in the multiple layers of the designs. They certainly would have noticed the similarities and differences with Kuniyoshi's bestselling *Genji* series of 1845–1846. It is also possible that Ōmiya Kyūjirō, the series publisher, encouraged Yoshiiku in his endeavours to match Kuniyoshi, in order to better promote and sell the prints to the public. Future research may shed light on this and will almost certainly reveal even more sources of inspiration for this interesting *Genji* series by Utagawa Yoshiiku.



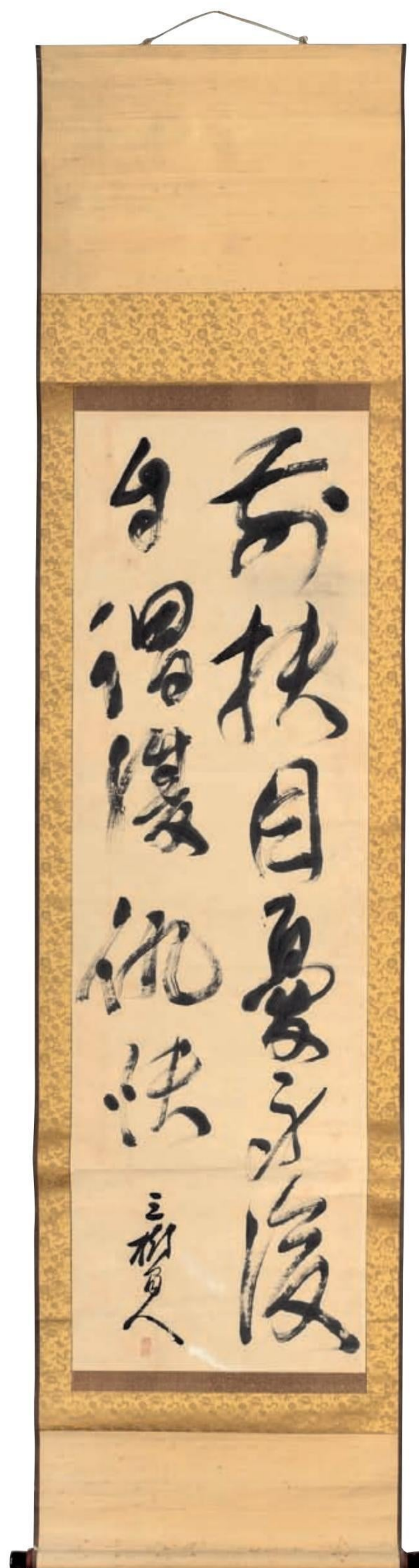
NOTES

- 1 The supplementary prints for *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji* are titled *Genji kumo shui* (Gleanings from the cloudy chapters of the tale of Genji).
- 2 I am much obliged to Henk Herwig for bringing the other sources of inspiration within Kuniyoshi's work to my attention, in addition to *Pictures of the floating world compared to the cloudy chapters of Genji*.
- 3 Guidi, A., *Utagawa Yoshiiku (1833–1904). Creatività e ricchezza cromatica alla fine di un'era*, Sistema Museale di Ateneo, Bologna 2019, p. 12. The eponymous exhibition at the Museum of Palazzo Pozzi was held from 14 October 2018–24 February 2019.
- 4 Cabañas Moreno, P., *Héroes de la gran pacificación*, Satori, Gijón 2013, p. 17; Thompson, S.E., 'Poetry, incense, card games, and pictorial narrative coding in early modern Genji pictures', in: *Rethinking visual narratives from Asia: intercultural and comparative perspectives* (Green, A., ed.), Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong 2013, p. 121.
- 5 Schaap, R., 'Utagawa Kunisada and the copy & paste tradition', in: *Andon*, no. 105, 2018, pp. 5–24.
- 6 Fagioli, M., *Yoshitoshi e Yoshiiku: esposizione permanente*, Giulio Giannini e Figlio, Florence 1975, p. 8.
- 7 Biographical data based on Newland, A.R. (ed.), *The Hotei encyclopedia of Japanese woodblock prints*, Hotei Publishing, Amsterdam 2005, p. 505; Marks, A., *Japanese woodblock prints: artists, publishers, and masterworks, 1680–1900*, Tuttle Publishing, North Clarendon 2010, pp. 158–159; Cabañas Moreno, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–22; Guidi, *op. cit.*, pp. 11–15.
- 8 Ochiai Yoshiiku, Tokyo, Ōta Memorial Museum of Art, 3–26 August 2018.
- 9 Yoshiiku's *Yuki no fumi yukari no tamazusa* (Winter writing, a precious letter) from 1861 and *Yasa Genji oniwa no yūran* (Elegant Genji viewing a garden) from 1862, Yoshitoshi's *Enoshima Chigo-ga-fuchi* (Chigo-ga-fuchi in Enoshima) and *Kanagawa Daikoku-rō Yokohama chōbō* (Panoramic view of Yokohama from the Daikoku-rō in Kanagawa), both from 1864; see Marks, A., *Genji's world in Japanese woodblock prints*, Brill, Leiden 2012, plates 260, 187, 197, 224.
- 10 Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII is portrayed eight times by Kuniyoshi in this series, Nakamura Utaemon IV five times, see Robinson, B.W., *Kuniyoshi. The warrior-prints*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1982, pp. 129–132; Yoshiiku portrayed Nakamura Utaemon IV as the boatman Matsuemon in the play *Hiragana seisuki* (The secret art of rowing backwards) in 18. *Matsukaze* (The wind in the pines), see Herwig, A. and H., *Heroes of the kabuki stage*, Hotei Publishing, Amsterdam 2004, p. 135.
- 11 For reasons of consistency all chapter titles and quoted poems in this article are based on Edward Seidensticker's English translation of the *Genji monogatari* (Seidensticker, E.G., *Murasaki Shikibu. The tale of Genji*, Knopf, New York 1976).
- 12 Guidi, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
- 13 Kuniyoshi's print 40. *Minori* (The rites) and Yoshiiku's 41. *Maboroshi* (The wizard).
- 14 See the Artelino, Ukiyo-e archive # 38727.
- 15 'Modern imitations of Genji' is used by Herwig, *op. cit.*, p. 106, 'Modern parodies of Genji' by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (collections website), 'Stylish imitations of Genji' by Marks, *op. cit.* (2012), p. 27.
- 16 Clark, T., 'Mitate-e: some thoughts, and a summary of recent writing' in: *Impressions*, no. 19, 1997, pp. 7–27.
- 17 Nguyen, A.M. (ed.), *New essays in Japanese aesthetics*, Lexington Books, Lanham 2017, p. 261.
- 18 Marks, *op. cit.* (2012), p. 27.
- 19 Guidi, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
- 20 Other examples, besides the prints discussed, are Yoshiiku's 13. *Akashi*, for which parts are taken from Kuniyoshi's *Hidari Jingorō of Lives of remarkable people renowned for loyalty and virtue*, and Yoshiiku's 11. *Hanashirusato* (Orange blossoms), partly based on Kuniyoshi's 33. *Fuji no uraba* (Wisteria leaves).
- 21 *Mongaku Shonin under the waterfall of Nachi, encouraged by Fudo Myoo and his acolytes Kongara and Seitaka*, # 18 of the list on the exhibition's webpage of the Ōta Memorial Museum of Art (www.ukiyoe-ota-muse.jp/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/yoshiikukaisetsu.pdf).
- 22 *Priest Karukaya Doshin and his child Ishidomaru*; see database Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University, # 114-0264.
- 23 Besides *Shell of locust*, the prints inspired by this book are 17. *Eawase* (Picture contest), 37. *Yokobue* (The flute) and 48. *Sawarabi* (Early ferns).
- 24 See the central sheet of Kunisada's triptych *The scene of the Tōkaidō board game*, 1847–1852, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, # 00.973-5.

An intriguing work of Japanese calligraphy from the former Felix Tikotin collection in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Hori Sakiko

The art of Chinese and Japanese calligraphy was fairly unknown and unstudied in Europe before the 1930s. , through exhibitions, the art form slowly found a place in the appreciation of far-eastern painting and calligraphy in the West. This article focuses on one work of Japanese calligraphy in the collection of the Rijksmuseum that might have had a role in bringing about this awareness, despite lingering questions about its authenticity. The calligraphy is mounted as a hanging scroll and consists of eleven characters and is accompanied by a four-letter signature and a seal on the lower left-hand side (fig. 1).



Documentation and History

In 1926, the German Oriental art historians Otto Kümmel (1874–1952) and William Cohn (1880–1961) founded *Die Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst* (*The East Asian Art Society*).¹ The society was active mainly in Berlin, holding lectures on Oriental art and publishing the *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift* (*East Asian Journal*). One of the society's members was Felix Tikotin (1893–1986), who ran a Japanese art gallery in Berlin.² Sometime between 1931 and 1932, he was approached by Vilhelm Slomann (1885–1962), director of the Kunstindustrimuseet (Museum of Art & Design) in Copenhagen, with a proposal to organise “the best exhibition of Japanese art in Europe”.³ At first, Tikotin was reluctant to accept the huge amount of work that would be involved necessary, but eventually agreed. Kümmel would compile the catalogue together with Fritz Rumpf (1888–1949), a member of the East Asian Art Society and friend of Tikotin, and the museum staff would take care of the preparations. The exhibition took place at the Kunstindustrimuseet in January 1933. The Japanese calligraphy introduced at the beginning of this article was described for the first time in the Copenhagen exhibition catalogue (fig. 2).⁴

Immediately after the Copenhagen exhibition, Tikotin moved to the Netherlands with his collection, where he held another exhibition of Japanese art in Amsterdam in June 1933. The catalogue was compiled by Kümmel, presenting the same calligraphic work included in the Copenhagen exhibition (fig. 3). The calligraphy was also featured in a Dutch art magazine at the time, which stated that it was the first Japanese artwork of a calligraphy, mounted on its own as a hanging scroll, exhibited in the Netherlands (fig. 4). It also noted that it was not just a good sample of *hitsuryoku* (brush power), but also instructive because of the calligraphic technique that

created wet, dark areas and dry, light areas with a single brush stroke.⁵ In September 1933, this calligraphic work was donated by Tikotin to the Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst (The Association of Friends of Asian Art).

Following the two 1933 exhibitions, an exhibition of Japanese art was held at the Gewerbemuseum in Basel (closed in 1996) in February 1935, compiled by Cohn. The catalogue shows that this work was presented by the Association of Friends of Asian Art but does not offer any new insights or more detailed explanations than those in the two 1933 catalogues (fig. 5).⁶

According to a provenance card kept in the Rijksmuseum, Robert Hans van Gulik (1910–1967), a Dutch scholar of Chinese, who graduated in Oriental Studies at Leiden and Utrecht Universities and spent a long time in Japan and China as a diplomatic secretary, attempted to decipher this calligraphic work. His attempt centred on the characters alone, with no record of any reading or discussion of its contents (fig. 6a). It appears that this work lay forgotten until, in 1972, it was loaned to the Rijksmuseum by the Association of Friends of Asian Art. Records exist of at least one Japanese researcher attempting to transcribe the calligraphy (fig. 6b). Research to follow up on Kümmel's initial study has thus long been overdue.

Two aims of this paper are, first, to clarify the details of this calligraphic work, based on Kümmel's commentary and with the addition of new material from Japan and, second, to examine the influence that this calligraphic work exercised, if any, on the Dutch understanding of Japan at the time.

1.

Hanging scroll.

Rijksmuseum, AK-MAK-365.

Description by Otto Kümmel

According to Kümmel, the calligrapher was Rai Mikisaburō (1825–1859).

Third son of the famous historian Rai Sanyō; fighter for the restoration of Imperial power, which was the reason that the Tokugawa Shōgun had him killed. The text of this painting, a Chinese proverb, can be roughly translated as: “Malice threatens me, but someone will rise to avenge me”, was probably written shortly before Mikisaburō’s capture.

Ink painting on paper.

Signed: Sanju dōjin.

Stamp: Rai Jun. (Translation of fig. 3).

Kümmel’s basis for attributing this calligraphic work to Mikisaburō and dating it to just before his imprisonment is a conjecture based on the content of the inscribed Chinese poem written here, as there exists no evidence to support the date of production with any certainty.

It should be noted that the transcription by Robert Hans van Gulik was made sometime after 1935, when he received his doctorate, as his name on the provenance card bears the title of Doctor.⁷ It was most likely written after the Second World War, as the eighth character in his transcription, 謂, was originally written with a Japanese character, but then the radical 言 was erased with two oblique lines and was eventually corrected to the simplified Chinese character 讠, devised in 1950s China.

It is not clear how well Kümmel was able to decipher the individual Chinese characters on the calligraphic work in 1933, but, according to the art historian Yashiro Yukio (1890–1975), Kümmel, who worked in the department of East Asian Art at the Berliner Völkerkundemuseum (Museum of Ethnology Berlin), had a large collection of contemporary

2.

Catalogue description
of the exhibition held in
Copenhagen in January
1933.

Fritz Rumpf og Otto Kümmel,
*Japansk Kunst og Kunsthåndværk:
Samlingen Tikotin. Udstillet i det
danske Kunstindustrimuseum.
Januar-Februar 1933, Petersen,
Copenhagen 1933, p. 10.*

3.

Catalogue description
of the exhibition held in
Amsterdam in June 1933.

Otto Kümmel, *Tentoonstelling van
Vroege Japansche Kunst: verzameling
Felix Tikotin; van 20 juni tot 15 juli
1933 in het gebouw ‘Leesmuseum’, De
Bussy, Amsterdam 1933, p. 10.*

4.

Bulletin der vereeniging
van vrienden der Aziatische
kunst.

Maandblad voor beeldende kunsten,
jrg 10, no 9, 1933, p. 287.

5.

Catalogue description of
the exhibition held in Basel
in February 1935.

William Cohn, *Die Kunst des alten
Japan: 21. Februar - 14. April 1935,*
Gewerbemuseum, Basel 1935, p. 51.

22. *Rai Mikisaburō*. Billedrulle (kinesisk Ordsprog, omtrent betydende: „Ulykker truer mig, men en Hævner vil opstaa“). Tusch paa Papir. Betegnet: Sanju Dōjin. Stempel: Rai Jun. Rai Mikisaburō (1825—1859) var 3. Søn af den berømte Historiker Rai Sanyō, der var Forkæmperen for den kejserlige Magt og derfor henrettedes af Tokugawa. Billedrullen er aabenbart malet kort før Fængslingen. H. 127 cm, B. 38 cm.

20. RAI MIKISABURŌ (1825—1859).

Derde zoon van den beroemden geschiedkundige Rai Sanyō, strijder voor het herstel der Keizerlijke macht, reden waarom de Tokugawa Shōgun hem liet vermoorden. De tekst van deze schildering, een Chineesche spreuk, waarvan de inhoud ongeveer luidt: „Onheil bedreigt mij, maar iemand die mij zal wreken zal opstaan“, is waarschijnlijk kort voor Mikisaburō’s gevangenneming geschreven. Inkschildering op papier. Gesigneerd: Sanju Dōjin. Stempel: Rai Jun. Hoog: 127 cM. Breed: 38 cM.



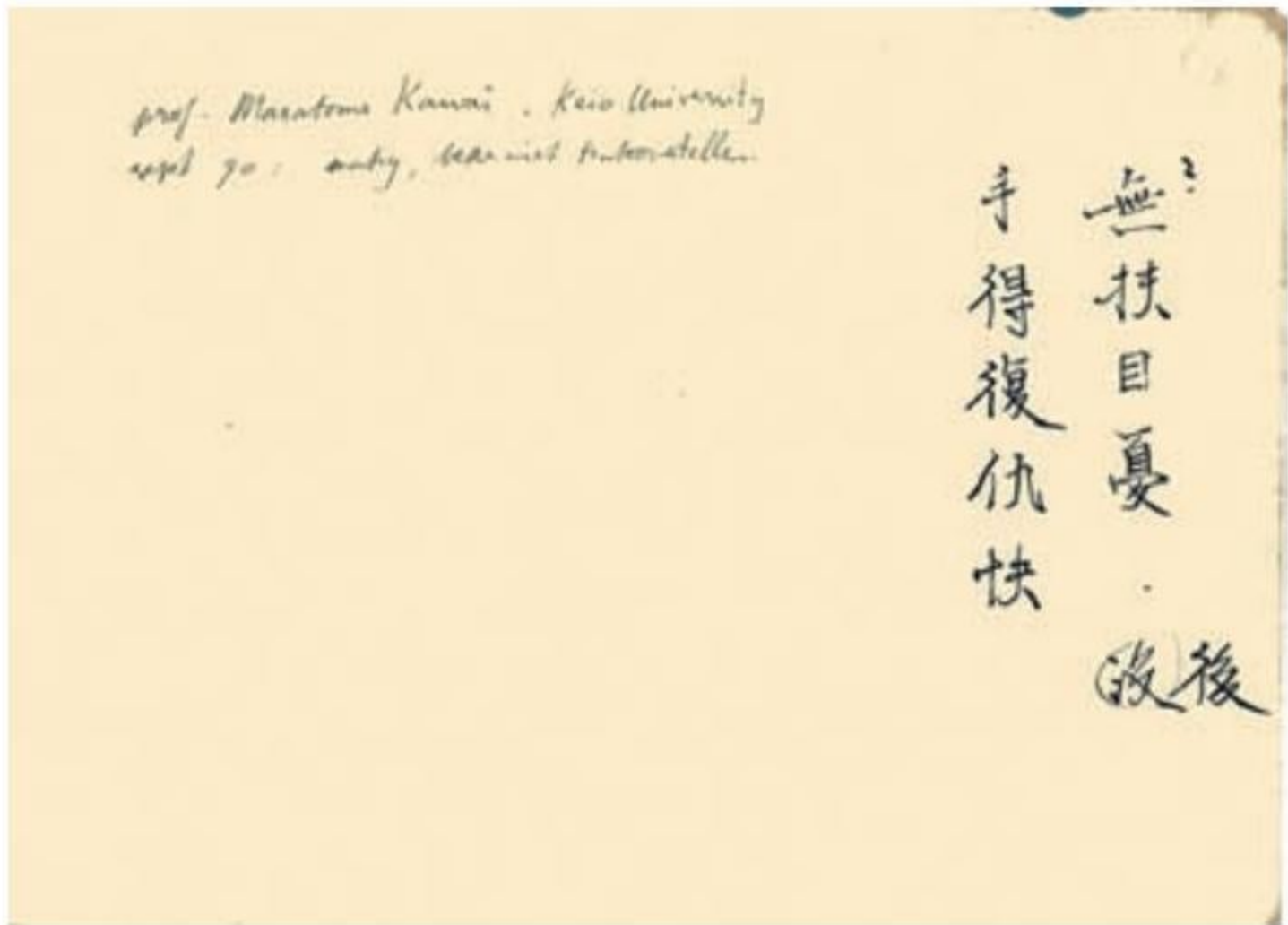
531 *Rai Mikisaburō* (1825—1829).
Kakemono: Spruch.
Besitzer: Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Amsterdam.

art journals such as *Kokka* and *Bijutsu kenkyū* (Art studies), which were regularly published in Japan at the time, as well as publications by the Tokyo publisher *Shimbi shoin*, and a wide range of Chinese and Korean publications.⁸ Moreover, Yashiro stated that Kümmel was also well versed in specialist books. It is possible, therefore, that Kümmel may either have determined from the *Rai Jun* seal that this was the work of Rai Mikisaburō, or that Tikotin originally had information that it was the work of Mikisaburō and passed this on to Kümmel. Furthermore, while many of the

eleven characters are in the cursive or line style, Kümmel was probably able to decipher the tenth character 仇 (the fourth character, counting from the top in the left vertical row), which is clearly legible. The Chinese character 仇 means ‘mortal enemy’ or ‘rancour’ in both Chinese and Japanese, and it is possible that Kümmel’s interpretation of ‘avenge’ was based on the historical facts of Mikisaburō’s life. However, Kümmel defines the content of this calligraphy only as a ‘Chinese proverb’ and does not name any specific Chinese poem or person.

Groep: MAK No. 365	Foto:	MUSEUM VAN AZIATISCHE KUNST - STEDELIJK MUSEUM - AMSTERDAM	
Land van herkomst: JAPAN		Calligrafie, door Rai Mikisaburō (1825-1859) 賴三樹三郎 Gesigneerd: Sanju dōjin Zegels: Rai 賴 Jun 醇	Afmetingen in cm 127 x 38 cm.
Datering: 19e eeuw		Beschreven door O. Kümmel in de catalogus van een door F. Tikotin georganiseerde tentoonstelling in het Leesmuseum te Amsterdam, 1933.	
Materiaal: Inkt op papier		Tekst: (lesing van Dr. R. H. van Gulik) 前扶目憂 身後自謂復仇 快	
Verwerving: Geschenk van F. Tikotin 1933.		Literatuur: Maandbl. v. B. K., 1933, Sept, blz. 287, afb. idem Phoenix 19, , , , Bullet. Aziat K., 19, , , ,	
Verzekerd voor: fl. 300.			

6a.
Provenance card (front).
Rijksmuseum archive, AK-MAK-365.



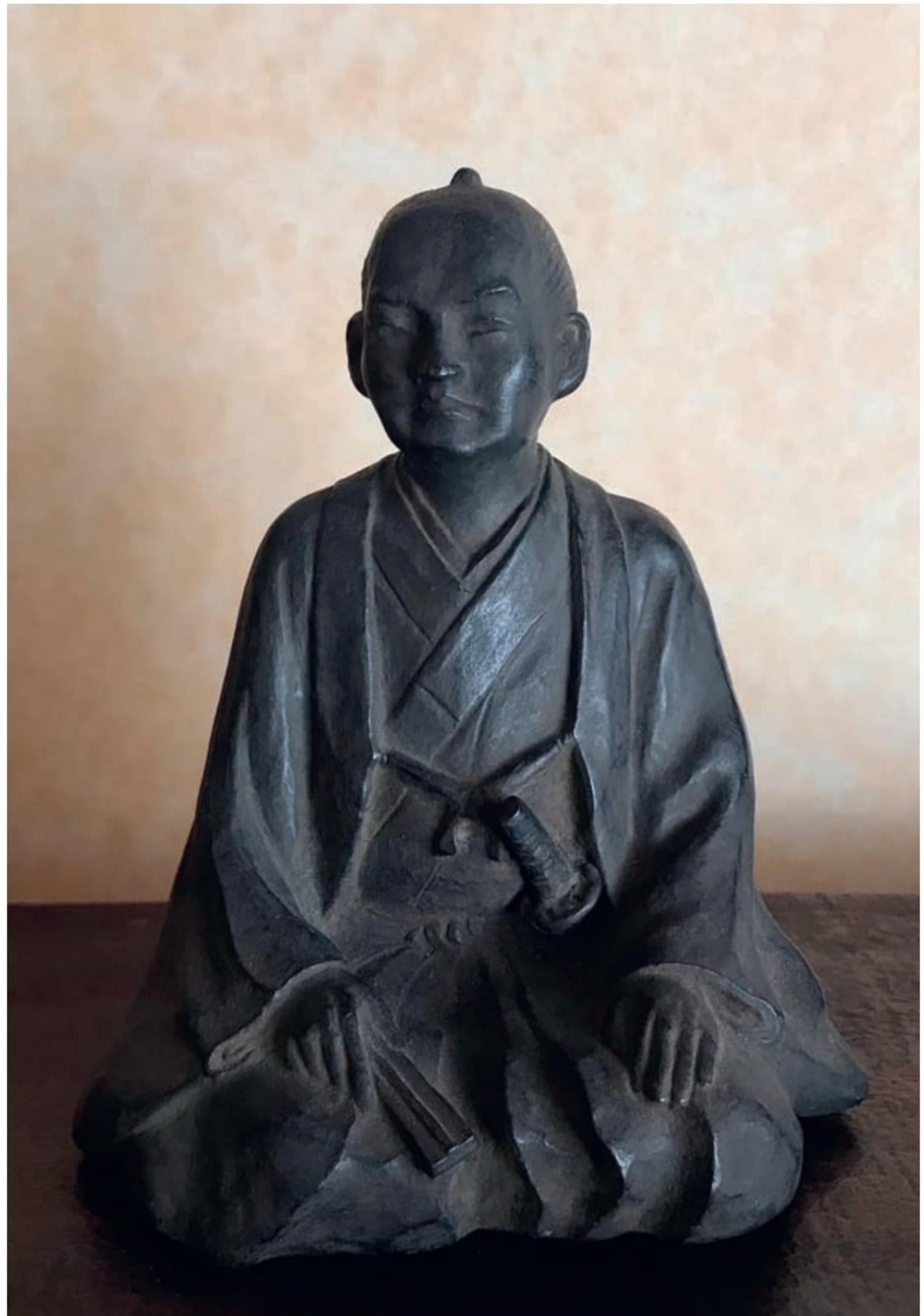
6b.
Provenance card (back).
Rijksmuseum archive, AK-MAK-365.

The life of Rai Mikisaburō (figs 7a and b)

In 1933, when Kümmel catalogued the exhibition in Copenhagen, the only biography of Rai Mikisaburō was a booklet transcribed from a dictation given by one of his pupils, Usui Tatsuyuki (1829–1916), in 1911 at the age of 83.⁹ This biography is thought to have been widely circulated in Japan at the time, but it is not known whether Kümmel had access to it. The following are excerpts from Mikisaburō's biography, written by Kizaki Aikichi (1866–1944), biographer of Mikisaburō's father, Rai Sanyō:

Mikisaburō was born in Kyoto on the 26th day of the 5th month of the 8th year of Bunsei (11 July 1825), the third son of the Confucian scholar Rai Sanyō. He was very active from an early age, and the episode which best illustrates his energy and bravery is an anecdote from when he was seven years old: on the 12th day of the 6th month of the 3rd year of Tenpō (1832), his mother Rie, seeing her son jump into a river swollen by the rainy season, was anxious, and tried to stop him swimming towards the opposite bank. However, after crossing to the other side of the river, Mikisaburō jumped into the river again and swam back. When his father Sanyō found out about this, he chastised Mikisaburō with moxibustion, and this is recorded in a letter written by Sanyō to his mother, Shizuko.¹⁰

Mikisaburō studied the Chinese poetry of his father and his grandfather, Rai Shunsui, and practised calligraphy from a young age. He was also writing Chinese poetry by the time he was 14.¹¹ At the age of 15, he went to Osaka to study, and at 18 he moved to Edo (Tokyo).



7a - 7b.

Statue of Rai Mikisaburō
(front and sideview).

Courtesy of Ippan zaidanhōjin Rai Sanyō kyūseki hozonkai (Rai Sanyō Preservation Association), Kyoto..

In the late 3rd month of the 3rd year of Kōka (1846), just in time for the cherry blossom season, Mikisaburō, a young man of 20 inspired by the *Sonnō* (*Revere the Emperor*) movement, was viewing the cherry blossoms at Kaneiji Temple, the family temple of the Tokugawa shoguns. Drunk and in high spirits, Mikisaburō left the temple and came to Shinobazu Pond, where he knocked down a stone lantern bearing the Tokugawa family crest, the hollyhock, and sank it into the pond. Then, he went on a rampage, drawing his sword on people who had gathered to stop him. At this time, the students of Sanyō went around apologising and hired some people to restore the stone lanterns that Mikisaburō had sunk into the pond. This episode has been recorded by several witnesses, but there are some differences in the details. At the very least, a common point is that Mikisaburō was drunk and knocked over the stone lantern and blamed the Tokugawa family.¹²

Mikisaburō later moved to Ōshū, Ezo, Ushū (a part of Dewa province), and Hokuriku, and eventually became involved in the *Sonnō jōi undō* (*Revere the emperor, expel the foreigners movement*) after the arrival of Matthew Calbraith Perry from the United States in the 6th year of Kaei (1853). In the middle of the 5th month of the 2nd year of Ansei (1855), he married Kimiko, the daughter of Yagi Genteki, a doctor. By the end of the 4th year of Ansei (1857) he was branded a dangerous individual by Ii Naosuke (1815–1860), the *tairō* (chief minister) of the Tokugawa shogunate.¹³ In the autumn of the 5th year of Ansei (1858), probably in anticipation of the danger he was in, Mikisaburō divorced Kimiko. Shortly afterwards, around the end of the 9th month of the same year, he was arrested in Kyoto as a political prisoner and taken to Edo.¹⁴

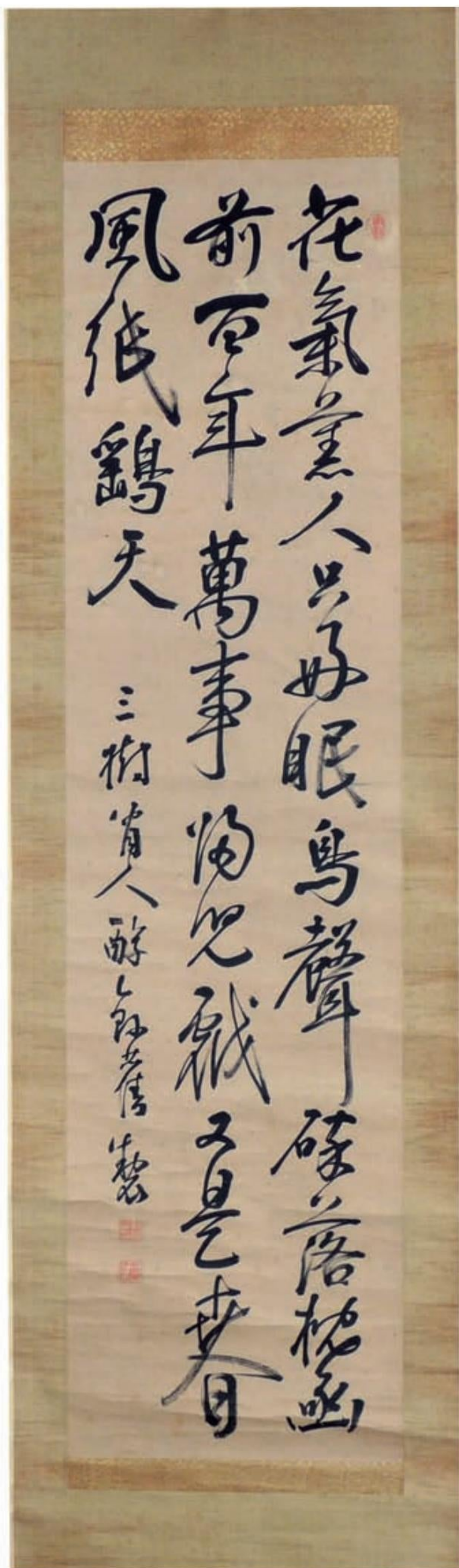
It is generally believed that the reason Mikisaburō was captured and sentenced to death in the Ansei Purge (1858–59) was due to his support of Tokugawa Yoshinobu (1837–

1913), while Ii Naosuke backed Tokugawa Yoshitomi (1846–1866) over the succession to the shogunate following the death of Tokugawa Iesada (1824–1858). Because Mikisaburō was the son of the famous Rai Sanyō, and Sanyō's disciples were optimistic that the shogunate would be lenient, many thought that he would not be executed, as several of those arrested at the same time as Mikisaburō had escaped death. Indeed, one of Sanyō's disciples, Egi Gakusui (1811–1881), waited outside the *hyōjōsho* (judicial council) with Mikisaburō's clothing, expecting punishment by exile at most. However, Mikisaburō was sent directly from the *hyōjōsho* to the place of execution, where he was beheaded on the 7th day of the 10th month of the 6th year of Ansei (1 November 1859).¹⁵ According to a story handed down by several individuals, Mikisaburō, as a successor to his father Sanyō, had started a fierce debate in the *hyōjōsho*, arguing for the restoration of imperial rule. He insisted that anyone who disobeyed the will of the court was a bandit, and he refused to give up his opinion even when he was about to be beheaded.¹⁶

Calligraphy by Rai Mikisaburō

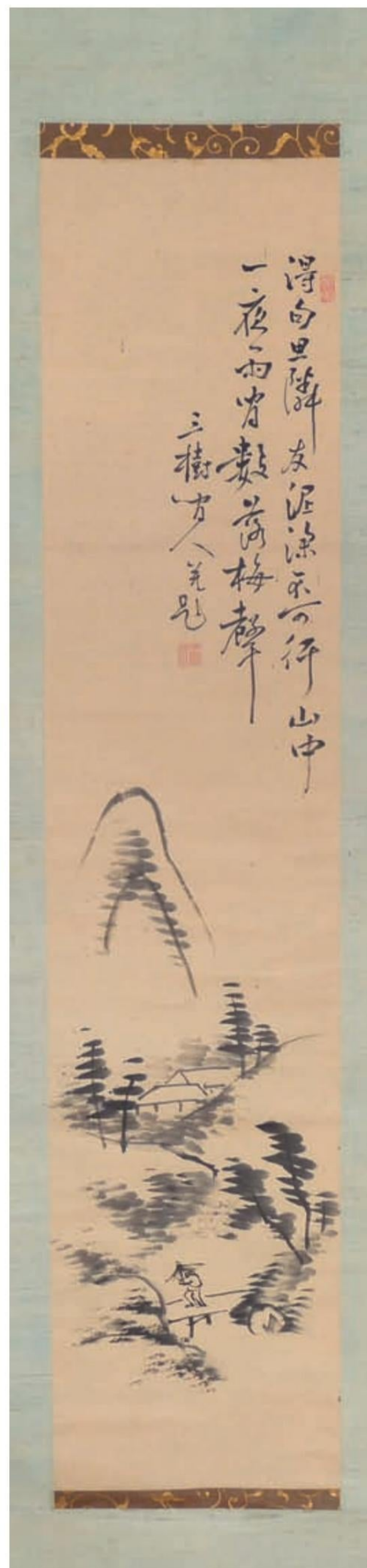
Four calligraphic works attributed to Mikisaburō from the collection of the Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum are discussed below (figs 8–11). The purpose of including these illustrations is to compare their handwriting and formal characteristics with the calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum. However, an in-depth study of the content and background of each individual Chinese poem is beyond the scope of this article.

Two of these poems were composed by Mikisaburō himself, of which one is in the form of *shichigon zekku* (Chinese poem of four lines, each of seven characters) (fig. 8) and the other is in the form of a *gogon zekku* (Chinese poem of four lines, each of five characters)



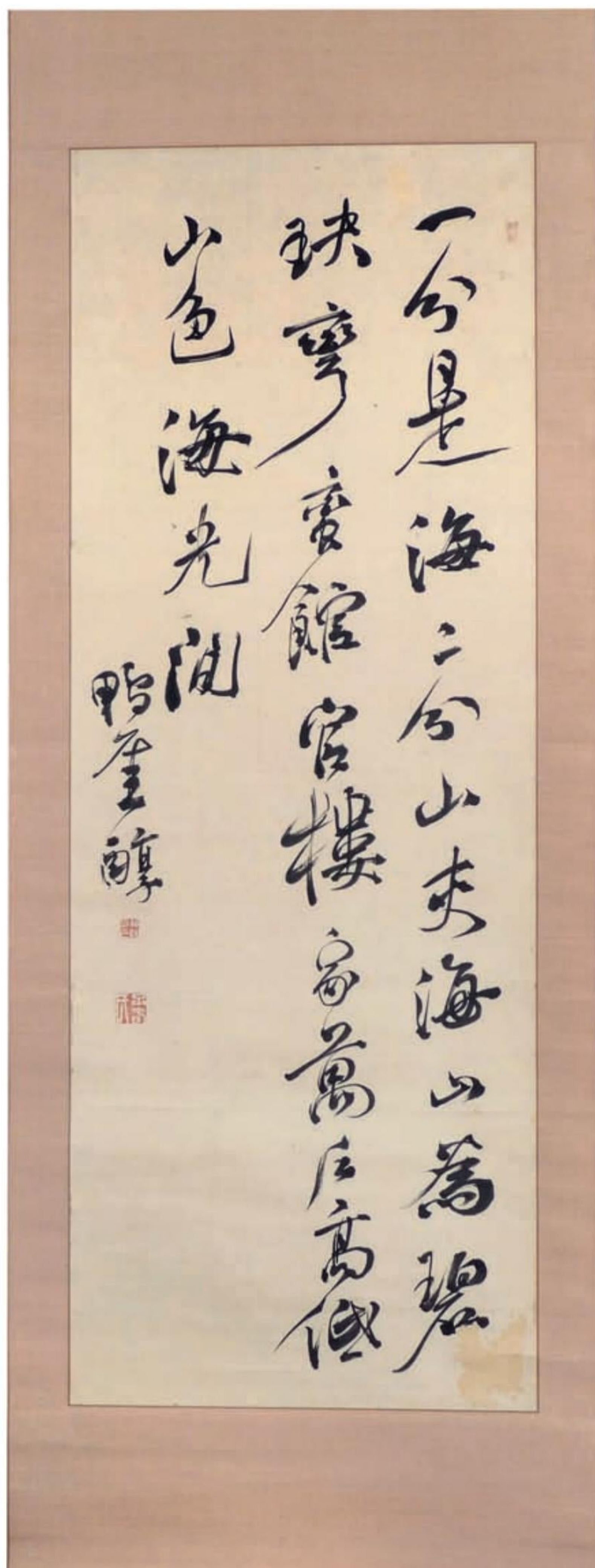
8.
Hanging scroll, calligraphic work attributed to Rai
Mikisaburō.

Courtesy of Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum, Sapporo.



9.
Hanging scroll, calligraphic work attributed to Rai
Mikisaburō, 'Jiga ni daisu'.

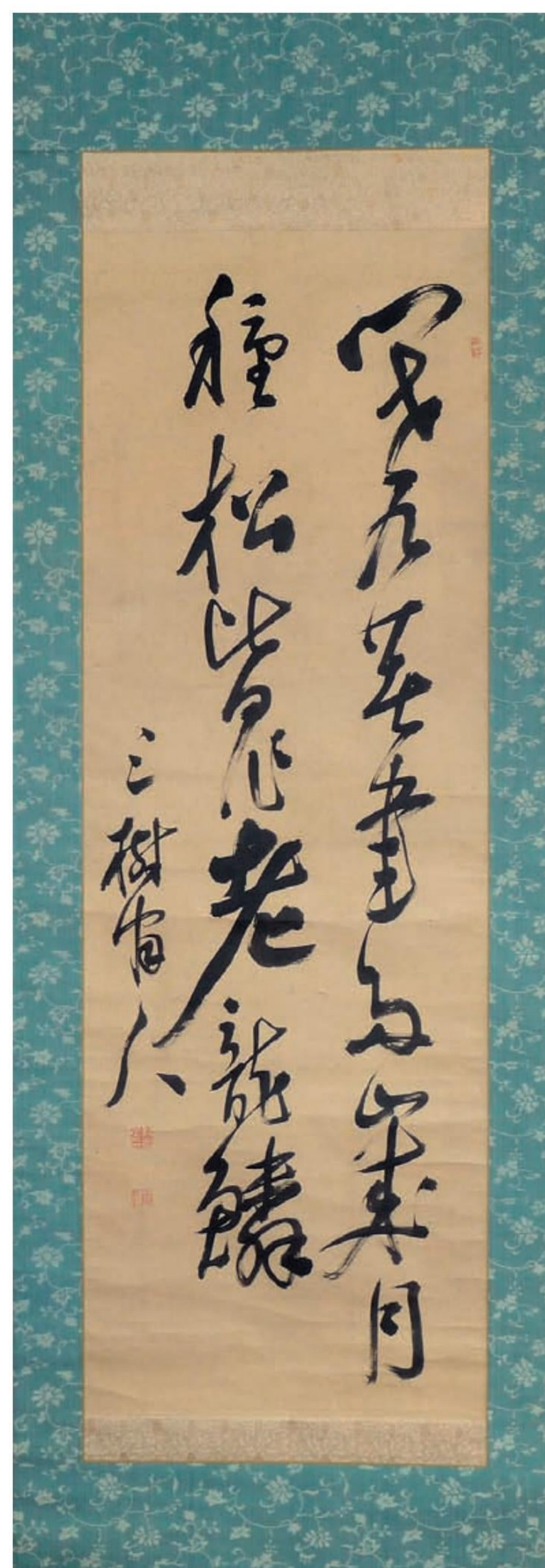
Courtesy of Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum, Sapporo.



10.

Hanging scroll, calligraphic work attributed to Rai Mikisaburō. Originally written by Rai Sanyō, 'Nagasaki ni itaru (Arrival in Nagasaki)', *Sanyō shishō* (Selective poems of Sanyō), vol. 3.

Courtesy of Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum, Sapporo.



11.

Hanging scroll, calligraphic work attributed to Rai Mikisaburō. Original poem by Wang Wei, no. 15, *Quan Tangshi* (Complete Tang poems), vol. 128, 2nd year of Hōei (1705).

Courtesy of Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum, Sapporo.

above a landscape sketch drawing (fig. 9). The other two poems were composed by different authors. One is a *shichigon zekku*, written by Mikisaburō's father Sanyō during a visit to Nagasaki, and transcribed in full by Mikisaburō (fig. 10). The other is a *shichigon koshi* (free verse with seven-word lines) by Wang Wei (699–759), a prominent official of the Tang dynasty in China (fig. 11). Tang dynasty poems were compiled in China and published in 1705 in *Quan Tangshi* (*Complete Tang poems*), a compendium that was exported to Japan. This calligraphic excerpt from a poem by Wang Wei gives us an insight into Mikisaburō's classical education. In each of them, the form and rules of Chinese poetry are well preserved, and the form of the poem is not broken.

There are several different signatures and seals on known works of calligraphy attributed to Mikisaburō that remain in Japan today. According to the Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum, it is difficult to determine the authenticity of Mikisaburō's calligraphy by seals and signatures, and the only way to identify genuine works is by comparing them with calligraphy that has been established as authentic.

The signatures in figures 8, 9 and 11 resemble closely the calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum. Although Kümmel might have read the signature as *Sanju dōjin* 三樹同人, the correct reading of the signature is *Miki kanjin* 三樹間人, with the third character being 間, the old character form of 間, not 同.¹⁷ Incidentally, 'Mikisaburō' is written in Chinese characters as 三樹三郎.

In addition, at least seven similar portraits of Sanyō, painted a month before his death by his pupil Higashiyama Giryō (1800–1865), have been identified.¹⁸ In the 3rd year of Kaei (1850), Mikisaburō was commissioned by Egi Gakusui to transcribe one of Sanyō's own appraisals (fig. 12).



12.

Portrait of Rai Sanyō
by Higashiyama Giryō,
3rd year of Tenpō (1832).
Original praise by Rai
Sanyō, Praise written by
Rai Mikisaburō, 3rd year of
Kaei (1850).

Courtesy of Seishikan alumni
association, Hiroshima.

Rai Sanyō (1780–1832) and Chinese Poetry

Sanyō was born in Osaka on the 27th day of the 12th month of the 9th year of An'ei (21 January 1781), the eldest child of Neo-Confucian scholar Rai Shunsui (1746–1816) and his wife Shizuko (Baisi). He was a scholar of Chinese during the late Edo period who used Chinese and Japanese history to comment on current politics. His best-known works are *Nihon gaishi* (*Unofficial history of Japan*), a history of the rise and fall of the *samurai* class, *Tsūgi* (*Political treatises*), and *Nihon seiki* (*Overview of Japanese history*). He was also an excellent composer of poetry on historical

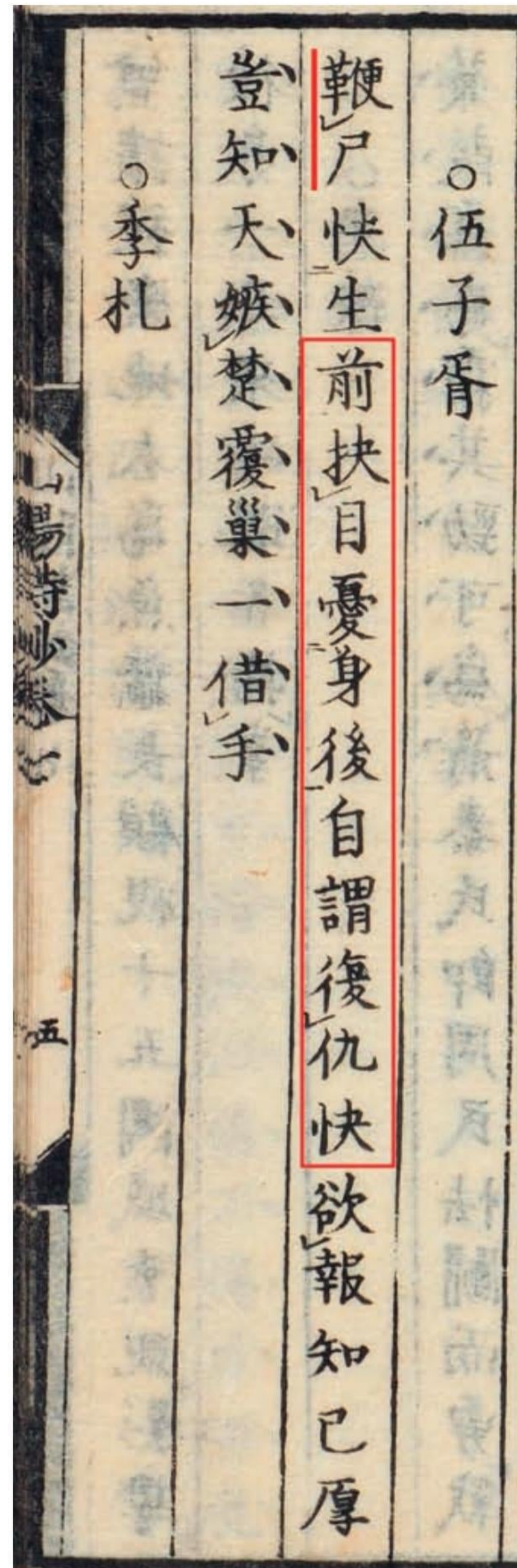
subjects. His calligraphic works were widely admired during his lifetime, and his works were coveted by feudal lords and other high-ranking officials. He left a substantial amount of works composed during his frequent travels; however, many forgeries have been identified. He also advertised for the sake brewery Kenbishi with poems and articles, for which he received sake in return.

In the 3rd month of the 1st year of Bunsei (1818), during a trip to Kyūshū, Sanyō saw a Dutch ship in Nagasaki, and, after hearing about Napoleon through an interpreter, he wrote the poems *Futsurō ō no uta* (*The king of France*) and *Oranda sen no uta* (*The voyage of the Dutch ship*).

He died on the 23rd day of the 9th month of the 3rd year of Tenpō (16 October 1832), while writing the aforementioned *Nihon seiki*, which was later completed by his pupils.

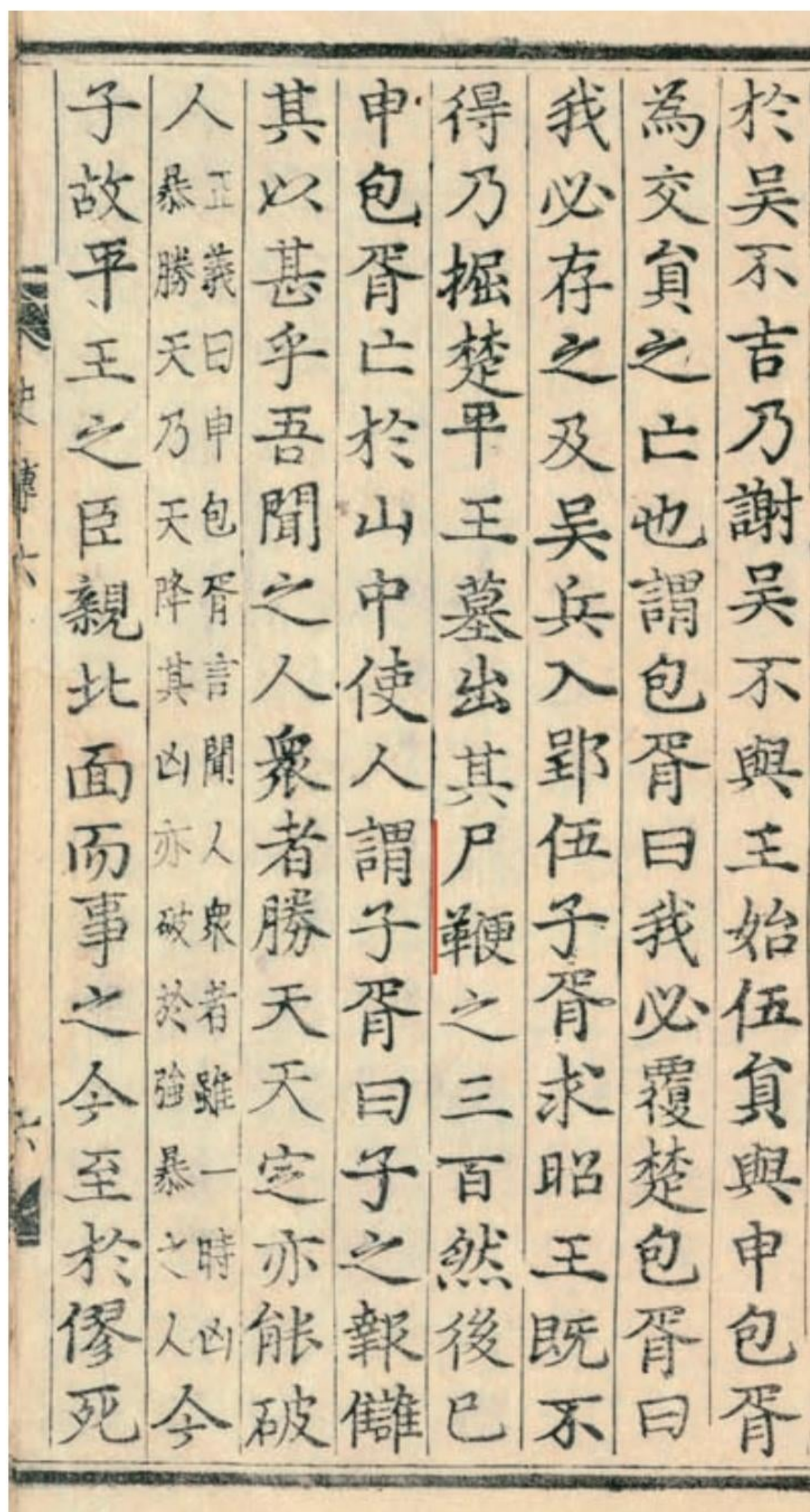
In Japan, Sanyō is regarded more as a historian or a political thinker than a literary figure. Historically, Sanyō's ideas have been credited with influencing the ideology of Japan's late Edo period imperialist movement, but Sanyō himself advocated the restoration of the Tokugawa government, rather than its downfall. The principle of the expulsion of foreigners was originally established after Sanyō's death, at the insistence of Tokugawa Nariaki (1800–1860). Although Sanyō was reluctant to accept trade with the West, he did not advocate the expulsion of foreigners in any of his writings. It would therefore be erroneous to conclude that Mikisaburō was following in his father's footsteps in his commitment to the *Sonnō jōi* movement.¹⁹

A comparison of the Rijksmuseum calligraphy with the Chinese poems in the *Sanyō shishō* (*Selective poems of Sanyō*) compiled by Sanyō's disciples after his death and published in the 4th year of Tenpō (1833), shows that the calligraphy is an excerpt from one of Sanyō's poems, marked by the red square (fig. 13).



13.
伍子胥: *Go Shisho* (in Chinese: *Wu Zixu*), Sanyō *Shishō* (*Selective poems of Sanyō*) vol. 7, Book 4, Gogyokudō, 4th year of Tenpō (1833), leaf no. 5-front.

National Institute of Japanese Literature bibliographic data, ID: 200019062.



The Poem *Go shisho* 伍子胥
(in Chinese: Wu Zixu) by Rai Sanyō
(fig. 13)

Rai Sanyō often quotes from the *Shiji* (*Records of the grand historian*) written by Sima Qian (c.145/135–c.87/86 BC). In the poem *Go shisho* by Sanyō, two episodes concerning Wu Zixu (died 484 BC) from the State of Chu are quoted: 鞭尸 ('whip the corpse') and 抉眼 ('gouge the eyes').

Wu Zixu originally served the State of Chu with his father and brother but was tricked by Ping Wang (died 516 BC) of Chu who murdered his father and brother. He fled to the State of Wu, hoping for a chance to retaliate, but the chance never came as Ping Wang died. Later, when Wu Zixu invaded and defeated Chu, he discovered Ping Wang's mausoleum, opened

14.

Sima Qian, 'Wu Zixu liezhuan (Biography of Wu Zixu)', *Shiji* (*Records of the grand historian*) Book 26 vol. 66, no. 6, leaf no. 6-front, Gyoseogwan, Hanyang (Seoul) 1573–1608.

The National Diet Library bibliographic data, ID: 000007507428.

it, and then struck the corpse with a whip 300 times.²⁰ This episode of Wu Zixu is the origin of the modern Japanese idiom *shikabane ni muchi utsu* 尸に鞭打つ, meaning 'to whip a corpse' (fig. 14). As it is generally taboo to speak ill of the dead in Japan, this idiom is used to describe the act of criticising a dead person for what they said or did during their lifetime.

Wu Zixu, therefore, felt indebted to Helü (c.537–496 BC) of the State of Wu for giving him refuge in his dominion and tried to serve the Wu Kingdom. However, although he gave advice to Helü's son Fuchai (died 473 BC), he became distrustful due to the machinations of manipulative vassals.²¹ These vassals convinced Fuchai to force Wu Zixu to commit suicide by beheading himself. Wu Zixu said to Fuchai: "This is how you have treated me, who has served the State of Wu since your father's time, who has wished for the State of Wu to become a prosperous country, and who has wished for you to become a good king. Then plant a catalpa tree on my grave and make a coffin for yourself with the wood. And gouge out my eyes (抉(吾)眼),²² place them on the eastern gate. I will see with my own eyes that you, Wu, who did not listen to my advice and let the State of Yue go unchecked, is invaded and destroyed by the Yue." He then took his own life with a sword sent to him by Fuchai.²³

Sanyō's poem *Go shisho* is a poem of six lines, each of five Chinese characters, the first half of which is a couplet of the first and second phrases.

鞭尸快生前 (*hikabane ni muchi uchite seizen wo kokoroyokushi* 尸に鞭ちて生前を快くし)

抉目憂身後 (*me wo egurite shingo wo ureu* 目を抉りて身後を憂う)

自謂復仇快 (*mizukara iu ada wo fukushite kokoroyoshi to* 自ら謂う仇を復して快しと)

The poem's primary meaning is that in life he avenged himself by whipping the corpse of his father's and brother's murderer (鞭尸快生前), and in death, he gouged out his eyes and grieved (抉目憂身後). He stated that it was refreshing to take revenge on his enemies (自謂復仇快).

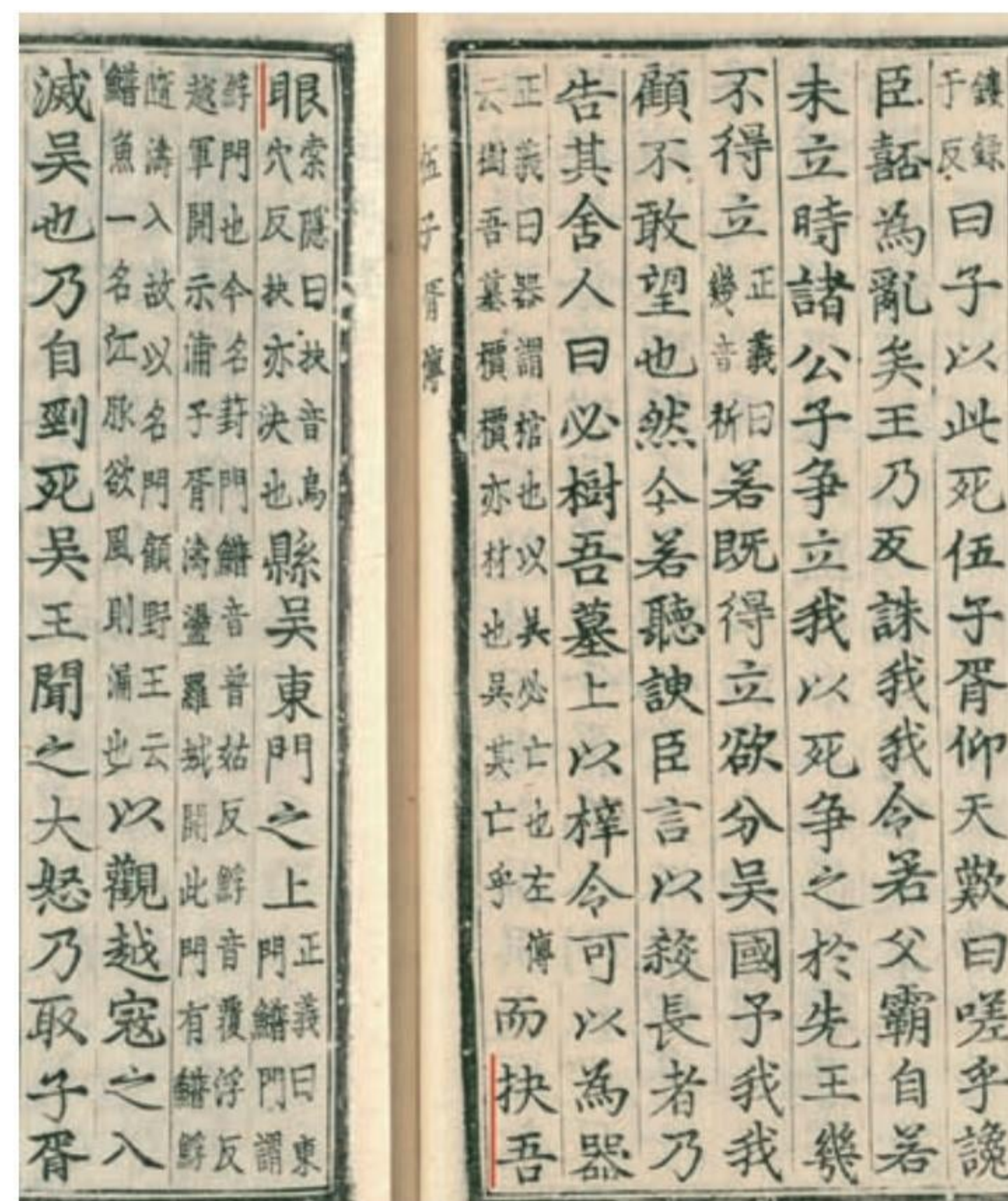
As has become clear, the Rijksmuseum calligraphy that R. H. van Gulik, attempted to transcribe is an excerpt of the poem *Go shisho*, and he was able to decipher all but the second character perfectly. Unfortunately, Japanese-Chinese poetry, such as that written by Rai Sanyō, can be difficult to decipher using only the knowledge of modern Japanese or Chinese. Specifically, the critical element of the calligraphy, 抉目, formed by the second and third characters, is a quotation from the episode of Wu Zixu in *Shiji* (fig. 15). But unless one is a Chinese history expert or a scholar of Chinese classics, the idiom 抉目東門 ('gouge out eyes and place them on the eastern gate') would be an obscure reference as it is rarely used by ordinary Chinese people in daily conversation. The provenance card transcription shows that even van Gulik, who was married to a Chinese woman, did not recognise 抉目 and misread it as 扶目. It is therefore clear that van Gulik was not aware of the Sanyō *shishō* and did not have access to the original text of the poem. It is also clear that his cursive reading skills were of a high order. On the back of the provenance card is a note (fig. 6b) dated September 1990, transcribed by Prof. Kawai Masatomo, then a professor

at Keio University and an art historian specialising in the history of Japanese painting from the medieval to the early modern eras. Prof. Kawai is an expert in the history of painting, not in Chinese poetry, and van Gulik, thanks to his extensive study of Japanese and Chinese calligraphy, gave the most accurate reading.

15.

Sima Qian, 'Wu Zixu liezhuan (Biography of Wu Zixu)', *Shiji* (Records of the grand historian) Book 26 vol. 66, no. 6, leaf no. 9-back and 10-front, Gyoseogwan, Hanyang (Seoul) 1573–1608.

The National Diet Library bibliographic data, ID: 000007507428.



Edzard Johan Modderman's views on the relationship between Japanese painting and calligraphy

The editor and Japanese prints' collector Berend Modderman (1870–1944) was also one of the founding members of the Vereeniging voor Japansche grafiek en kleinkunst (Society for Japanese Arts and Crafts).²⁴ He was in close contact with Tikotin after the latter's emigration to the Netherlands, and the earliest documented contact between them in regard to the exhibition of Japanese art in Basel in 1935. The Basel exhibition included over 400 works from the Tikotin collection, including a calligraphic work attributed to Mikisaburō, and the catalogue shows that Berend also loaned his own collection to the exhibition.²⁵ Berend's son was Edzard Johan Modderman (1902–1975). After the foundation of the Society for Japanese Art in November 1937, Berend and Edzard J. Modderman, together with Tikotin, often presented lectures and exhibitions on Japanese art.²⁶

In the Bulletin No. 2, published in October 1938, Edzard contributed an article on the connection between Japanese painting and calligraphy. The following is an excerpt from the article:

Calligraphy, the beautiful writing, has as much, if not more, value to the Japanese than drawing and it is a well-known fact that many of the famous artists were also famous calligraphers. For example, a Japanese artist's lexicon lists the famous artist Hokusai among the calligraphers and not among the painters. And if one looks through catalogues of Japanese collections, one will always come across *kakemono* (hanging scrolls) which consists of only a few lines of writing without any pictorial representation. These were judged worthy of being hung in

the *tokonoma* (alcove) of a Japanese home, not only because of the content of the text but mainly because of the qualities of the calligraphy.

Thus, it can be seen that the mastery of the brush is one of the driving factors of the Japanese artist, both for writing and for drawing. That this mastery requires incredible skill and firmness of hand, can be seen from the fact that the Japanese, in his crouching position in front of a low table, does not support his right arm at all, but moves it freely above the paper, while the hand holds the brush almost vertically.²⁷

This article was Edzard's description for an exhibition of Japanese drawings held at the Frans Hals Museum that same month. In addition, the following observations by Edzard were also published in the newspapers of the time:

(in Japan) Since the art of writing down complicated Chinese characters was recognised as a general necessity at a very early stage, and the beauty of handwriting was one of the elements by which civilisation and the development of mankind were measured, the practice of writing was given great importance in the upbringing of children. Children thus learned very early on about the possibilities offered by the brush and, at the same time, acquired a certainty of hand that seems almost unbelievable to us. This certainty is related to the way the brush was used. The brush was held vertically and moved across the paper with a completely free hand, without support.

Writing and drawing are closely connected because of the identical

way in which the brush is handled. Calligraphy is therefore considered as significant as drawing and is an art that is appreciated both artistically and for its technical qualities of superior line execution.

The calligraphic origin of the lines is clearly recognisable in almost all Japanese drawings and is indeed one of their special qualities.

Accustomed as we are to encompass the complete image in a drawing or other representation with our eyes, and to base our judgement in the first instance on the impression thus gained, the meticulous care with which the Japanese examine the quality of the brushstrokes, as it were, in every part is difficult for us to understand. We will therefore do well, when admiring Japanese drawings, not to lose sight of this point.²⁸

The reason Edzard was able to describe the Japanese way of using a brush in such detail is probably because that he had actually seen a Japanese person hold a brush and draw or write with it. Who might that have been? Perhaps it was Hara Junzō (1913–1968), the young and aspiring Japanese mount-maker whom Tikotin had invited to repair and decorate his Japanese collection.²⁹ Indeed, Edzard had commissioned Junzō to write the title of a poster for a Japanese print exhibition in Leiden in 1939 (fig. 16).³⁰

As mentioned above, in 1933 the calligraphic work attributed to Mikisaburō was the first piece of Japanese calligraphy in the Netherlands that was not integrated into a painting but was purely a written Chinese poem mounted as a hanging scroll. Five years later, in the article by Edzard in 1938, it was pointed out that hangings of purely written Chinese poetry were frequently found in the catalogues of Japanese art collections. It is probable that Edzard had seen the calligraphy attributed to Mikisaburō at the Amsterdam exhibition in June 1933, or at least at the Basel exhibition in 1935.



16.

Poster of Japanese print exhibition with calligraphy title by Hara Junzo, Leiden 1939.

SJA archive.

Export of Japanese artworks overseas since 1933

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, in effect during the first two decades of the 20th century, was primarily aimed at pursuing political and economic benefits, rather than at increasing mutual understanding between East and West. Laurence Binyon (1869–1943), director of the Oriental prints and drawings department at the British Museum, however, evaluated highly the efforts made by Japan in sending a rich collection of items for display at the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910, although there might have been some ulterior motive on Japan's part in sending such a marvellous collection.³¹

As the Empire of Japan had been victorious in World War I, it gradually became more and more uncompromising in international relations. This became apparent after the acquisition by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston of the *Kibi daijin nittō emaki* (*Scroll of minister Kibi's adventures in China*) in 1932, one of Japan's National Treasures, which resulted in the enactment of the Law Regarding the Preservation of Important Works of Fine Arts³² on 1 April Shōwa 8 (1933). After this, it became almost impossible for the world's art dealers to acquire Japanese artworks from Japan. Museums around the world were also unable to purchase high-quality Japanese artworks and, as a result, universities and research institutes had difficulties conducting research and offering degree programmes in Japanese art. Under these circumstances, Japanese artworks which were already in Europe, were, apart from Ukiyo-e prints, often perceived as being mere imitations of Chinese art. Oriental art dealers moved away from Japanese art, and Chinese art began to attract more attention.³³

In fact, from 1933 onwards, the exhibitions organised by the Association of Friends of Asian Art in the Netherlands

were mainly devoted to Chinese art. In 1934 an exhibition of modern Chinese paintings was held, and in 1935 lectures on Chinese art were organised in Amsterdam and The Hague, but there were no events related to Japanese art.³⁴ The International Exhibition of Chinese Art was held at Burlington House in London in 1935–1936 and the Association of Friends of Asian Art organised a tour of this London exhibition. In addition, in 1936, the Society organised an exhibition of Asian art at the Stedelijk Museum, in which 272 out of 556 works were from the Chinese art collection, and only 91 were from the Japanese art collection. At this point, the calligraphic work attributed to Mikisaburō was owned by the Association of Friends of Asian Art, but the catalogue of the exhibition does not list any calligraphic works. Therefore, there is no clear record of the specific Japanese calligraphy that Edzard saw at exhibitions, but the calligraphic work attributed to Mikisaburō is the most likely one.

The population of the Netherlands between 1930–1940 was just under 10 million. At the time of its foundation (1937), the Society for Japanese Art had 38 members, and in 1940 48.³⁵ This is less than 0.0005% of the population. There were, of course, non-members who were admirers of Japanese art, but they were a small number in the Netherlands.

Hara Junzō, who stayed in The Hague with Tikotin for fifteen months and had performed *ikebana* and tea ceremonies at Japanese art exhibitions around the Netherlands, was quoted in the daily newspaper *Yomiuri shimbun* on 9 April 1939 that “except for a few intellectuals, the general public in the Netherlands has little understanding of Japan”. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that the Society for Japanese Art, which from the time of its inception published a vigorous and regular Bulletin and organised evening study groups

and exhibitions of Japanese art, was central to the understanding of Japanese art in the Netherlands at that time. Of the 47 articles published in the first series (12 issues) of the *Bulletin of the Society for Japanese Art*, 11 articles were written by Edzard. He was indeed one of the pioneers in promoting the understanding and acceptance of Japanese art in the Netherlands.

Conclusion

I will leave it to the experts to make the final decision regarding the authenticity of the calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum, but, in my opinion, there is a possibility that it was not written by Rai Mikisaburō.

Firstly, from an early age, Mikisaburō studied the Chinese poetry of his grandfather Shunsui and his father Sanyō, and all of Mikisaburō's calligraphic works surviving in Japan follow the form of Chinese poetry. Additionally, in the case of excerpts from Chinese poems by other writers, the poem is cut in a way that preserves the form of the poem. However, the calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum shows that the original form of the poem has been altered by beginning from the fifth character of the first verse, even though the first and second verses of the original poem are in couplets in the original poem, which means the original meaning is not conveyed. This calligraphic work begins with the character 前 (before) and the sixth character reads as 後 (after), giving the impression it is a couplet, but it is clear from Sanyō's original poem that this is not the case.

Secondly, Mikisaburō was a man who took pride in the family traditions of his father and his ancestors and was willing to give his life in order to follow those traditions which he believed in.³⁶ Therefore, it is difficult to explain why Mikisaburō would have chosen to excerpt his father's poem in a manner that ignores its original meaning.

But one could assume that this calligraphy reflected Mikisaburō's state of mind, based on *Go shisho* written by Sanyō. It could be the case that the anticipation of his arrest and execution in the Ansei Purge is metaphorically alluded to by the five characters of the second verse of the original poem (袂目憂身後). Moreover, the first verse, 鞭尸快生前, which is a counter verse, could refer to the famous episode during Mikisaburō's excursion to Edo when he destroyed the Tokugawa family lantern and sunk it into a pond, connecting it to Wu Zixu who avenged himself by whipping the corpse of his father's and brother's murderer in his life. Furthermore, Ii Naosuke, who refused to take lenient measures against Mikisaburō was also killed after Mikisaburō's execution, just like Fuchai was killed after the death of Wu Zixu.

The story of how this epic calligraphy was written by Mikisaburō, who had vowed to take revenge on the shogunate, reads like a novel or the script to a historical film. It is easy to imagine how this scenario would have impressed and appealed to a European public, especially in the pre-World War II era when the emperor was revered as a deity in Japan and fascism and nationalism were on the rise in Europe, the time when Tikotin acquired this calligraphic work. However, there is little reason to believe that this dramatic story is true and that this calligraphic work is a genuine work of Mikisaburō, given the totality of the historical material that has survived.

During the Meiji period, there was a great deal of interest in honouring the famous and obscure patriots who led the way to the Meiji Restoration, and in this process, there was a growing tendency to value the calligraphic works of those victims of the Ansei Purge. As a result, the calligraphy of Mikisaburō was sought after and forgeries were produced. Calligraphers set aside their original work and created fake works of calligraphy. If you

were a reasonably skilled calligrapher, it was not difficult with practise to create a forgery. During the Meiji period, some of the fallen *samurai* families may have been so desperate for money that they produced forged works for sale.

The calligraphy in the Rijksmuseum, attributed to Rai Mikisaburō, attracted attention as a rare example of Chinese calligraphy at a time when the Netherlands generally collected paintings, Ukiyo-e prints, and crafts that were more visually pleasing than an art form displaying only written characters of a Far Eastern country. The appearance of this calligraphic work gave a new perspective on Japanese art, showing that it was not only paintings and Ukiyo-e that decorated the walls of households, but that also calligraphy, consisting only of characters, was treated as art in the same way. These new perspectives helped promote the subsequent acceptance and further understanding of Japanese art. In particular, the idea that in Japan, the brush is used in the same way for both writing and drawing, which led to a new way of perceiving Japanese art, whereby the quality of the brushstrokes is valued equally in both calligraphy and painting.

In addition, Kümmel perceived from the content of the written Chinese poem that it must have been written just before Mikisaburō's capture during the Ansei Purge. Leaving aside any issues regarding the authenticity of the calligraphy and the factual date of its creation, Kümmel's commentary may have suggested that some of the most passionate Japanese imperial loyalists of the end of the Edo period, such as Mikisaburō, were willing to die for their beliefs.

In any case, the calligraphy brought to the Netherlands by Felix Tikotin and presented as a work of Rai Mikisaburō was of great interest to those involved in Japanese art before and after the war and may have spurred an interest in calligraphy as an art

form. It can also be concluded that even a work of art that is most likely to be a forgery is not necessarily worthless if it can be shown to have had an influence on people's views and perceptions.

Felix Tikotin, a Japanese art dealer, does not seem to have been keen on writing research papers or records, and whose specific activities can only be verified by the archives. In fact, many of the first examples of Japanese objects in the Netherlands are attributed to Tikotin and this calligraphic work is one of them.³⁷



NOTES

- 1 Walravens, H., *Ostasiatische zeitschrift 1912–1943 - Mitteilungen der gesellschaft für ostasiatische kunst 1926–1943: Bibliographie und register*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2000, Vorwort XII.
- 2 *Viertes mitgliederverzeichnis, Gesellschaft für ostasiatische kunst Berlin*, Berlin October 1929, p. 35.
- 3 Tikotin, F., 'Erinnerungen eines sammlers', in: *Du verstehst unsere Herzen gut: Fritz Rumpf (1888–1949) im Spannungsfeld der deutsch-japanischen kulturbeziehungen*, Walravens, H., and Japanisch-Deutsches Zentrum, eds), VCH, Acta Humaniora, Weinheim 1989, p. 120. Note that this short autobiography by Tikotin himself was first published in French in 1982, before his death (Gard J.M., *Art japonais: l'art japonais dans les collections suisses*, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny 1982), and the one published after his death in 1989 was translated into German by Walravens.
- 4 It is not known where or when he acquired this calligraphic work. Tikotin visited Japan at least three times before 1933. The first time, he was accompanied by Rumpf. Jirka-Schmitz, P., 'Shin hanga and nihonga in Berlin, 1929–1931: donations and exhibitions', in: *Andon*, No. 97, September 2014, pp. 75–89.
- 5 'Bulletin der vereeniging van vrienden der aziatische kunst', in: *Maandblad voor beeldende kunsten*, jrg 10, no 9, 1933, p. 287.
- 6 There were 539 Japanese artworks exhibited in Basel, of which 419 were from the Felix Tikotin collection. Except for sculpture, the Tikotin Japanese collection dominates in all other genres. Note that the date of death of Rai Mikisaburō in catalogue no. 531 is incorrect.
- 7 Van de Wetering, J., *Robert van Gulik: his life, his work*, Soho Press, New York 1998, p. 146.
- 8 Yashiro Yukio, *Nihonbijutsu no onjin tachi (Benefactors of Japanese art)*, Bungei shunjū shinsha, Tokyo 1961, pp. 122–123.
- 9 Kizaki Kōshō (Aikichi), *Rai Miki den (Biography of Rai Mikisaburō)*,

Konnichi no mondai sha, Tokyo 1943, pp. 425–426.

10 Correspondence: Rai Sanyō to Shizuko, 24th day of the 6th month of the 3rd year of Tenpō (1832). Kizaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–17.

11 Kizaki, *op. cit.*, p. 453.

12 Kizaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–94, 383, 388, 466–467.

13 Kizaki, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

14 Kizaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 304.

15 Kizaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 340–341.

16 Kizaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 342–343, 384, 387, 400–401.

17 The signature on the provenance card is written as ‘Sanju Dōjin’. It is also annotated in Japanese as 三樹道人 with the third character written as 道, which is also incorrect.

18 Andō Hideo, ‘Rai Sanyō gazō to jisanbun ni kansuru ichikōsatsu (A study of Rai Sanyō’s portraits and self-praise)’, in: *Vutoku-kiyō, The bulletin of the institute of budō and moral education*, 1987, p. 93.

19 I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr Hamano Seiichiro, a Rai Sanyō researcher, who has given me a lot of advice on writing this short biography of Sanyō. This article does not deal with any political thought. For further information on Rai Sanyō’s political thought, see the work of Dr Hamano: Hamano Seiichiro, *Rai Sanyō no shisō: Nihon ni okeru seijigaku no tanjō (The political thought of Rai Sanyō: the birth of politics in Japan)*, University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo 2014.

20 Sima Qian, ‘Wu Zixu liezhuan (Biography of Wu Zixu)’, in: *Shiji (Records of the grand historian)*, Book 26 vol. 66, no. 6, leaf no. 6-front, Gyoseogwan, Hanyang (Seoul) 1573–1608. The National Diet Library bibliographic data, ID: 000007507428.

21 It was the vassals who wanted to get rid of Wu Zixu so that they could gain power as the young king’s entourage. The young Fuchai probably had no ill feelings towards Wu Zixu at first, but he was gradually deceived by his vassals who did not like Wu Zixu, and eventually forced Wu Zixu to commit suicide.

22 抉眼 and 抉目 both mean to gouge out the eyes. The Chinese character 眼 has a strong connotation of referring to the eyeball, while 目 has a wider range of meanings, including eyelid and vision, as well as the eyeball itself. In Japanese, it is 目を抉る (*me wo eguru*), but this is not an idiomatic expression like 尸に鞭打つ (*shikabane ni muchi utsu*). 吾 = my.

23 Sima, *op. cit.*, leaf no. 9-back and 10-front.

24 ‘Vereeniging voor Japansche grafiek en kleinkunst’ in: *Het vaderland: staat- en letterkundig nieuwsblad*, Ochtendblad A, 30 November 1937, p. 3.

25 Nr. 245, Totoya Hokkei (1780–1850), Drei surimono, Besitzer: B. Modderman, Amsterdam. in: *Die kunst des alten*

Japan, 21. Februar – 14. April 1935, Gewerbemuseum, Basel 1935, p. 31.

26 e.g., Invitation to attend a seminar at the home of F. Tikotin, Nassauplein 6, The Hague, on Thursday 9 June. Mr B. and Mr E.J. Modderman will give a lecture on the history and development of

egoyomi (picture calendar), and there will also be an opportunity to see one of Tikotin’s works in this field. SJA archive, 9 June 1938.

27 Modderman, E.J., ‘Japansche teekeningen’, in: *Bulletin van de vereeniging voor Japansche grafiek en kleinkunst*, Leiden October 1938 (1e reeks, No. 2), pp. 18–20.

28 ‘Japansche kunst. het verband tusschen teekenen en schoonschrift. een expositie te Haarlem’, in: *De maasbode*, Avondblad, Tweede blad, 24 October 1938, p. 7.

29 Hori Sakiko, ‘Japanese art dealer Felix Tikotin and Japanese mounter Junzo Hara: records in pre-war The Hague’, in: *International Japanese studies: annual report*, No. XVIII, 2021, pp.65–96.

30 Correspondence: E. J. Modderman to Tikotin, SJA archive, 28 June 1939.

31 Hori Sakiko, *Laurence Binyon and Japan: a missionary of beauty*, Master’s thesis, Hosei University International Japan-Studies Institute, Tokyo 2008. Besides, the purpose of the proposed article is neither to focus on any political views or theories nor support any political thought.

32 Original in Japanese: 重要美術品等ノ保存ニ関スル法律、昭和八年四月一日法律第四十三号.

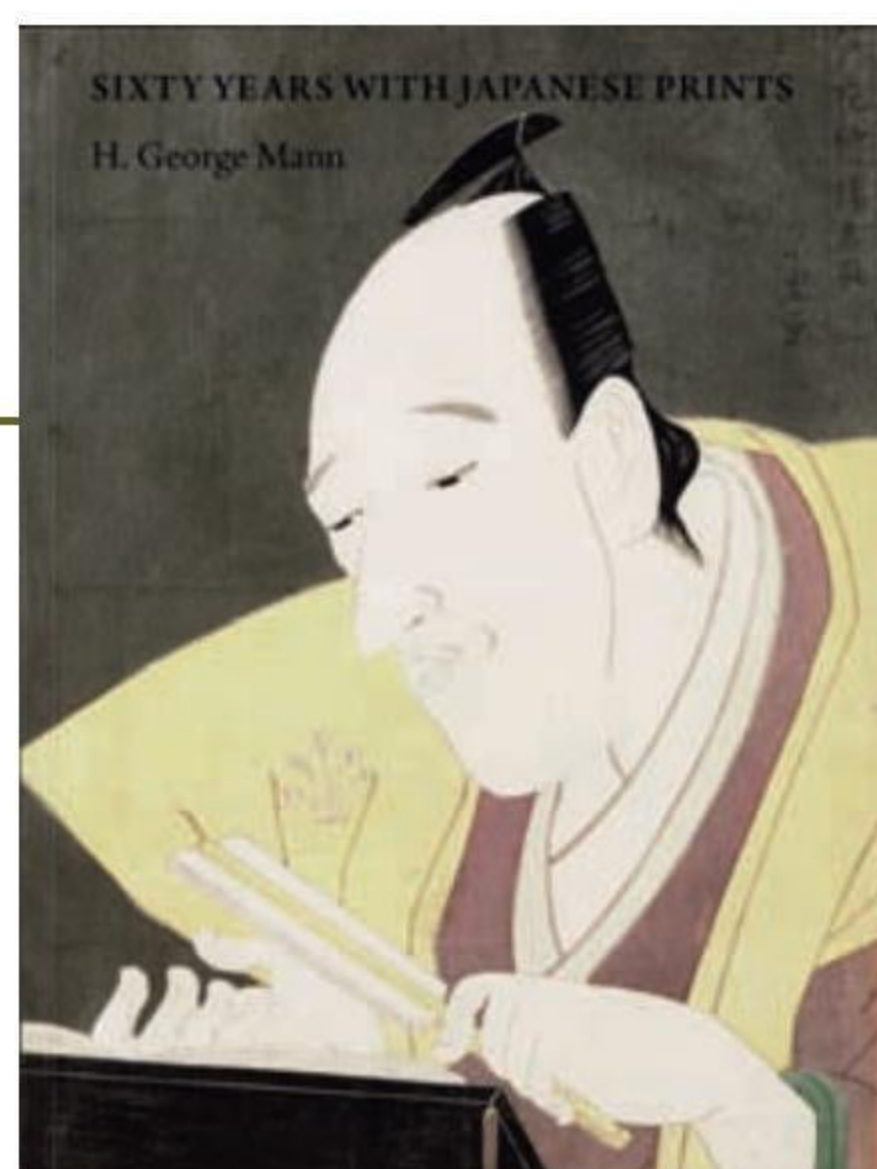
33 Yashiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 225–227.

34 *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van Aziatische kunst in particuliere en openbare collecties in Nederland*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam 1936, p. 6.

35 Herwig-Kempers, A., ‘History of the bulletin and Andon’, in: *Andon*, No. 100, December 2015, pp. 76–86.

36 Sanyō was not an advocate of the Jōi (*Expulsion of foreigners*) movement, but he was indeed an advocate of the Sonnō (*Revere the Emperor*) movement; at the same time, he advocated the restoration of the Tokugawa government. Mikisaburō believed that the principle of Sonnō jōi was the family motto, but this can be stated as a broad interpretation on his part, as his two elder brothers were not involved in the Sonnō jōi movement at all.

37 I hereby sincerely extend my thanks to those people who gave me precious advice and great encouragement to write this article: Ms Arendie Herwig-Kempers, former secretary of the Society for Japanese Art, Ms Rai Sumiko from Rai Sanyo Preservation Association in Kyoto, who prepared worthy photos of the only statue of Mikisaburō, Mr Shigeo Miyata, Deputy director of the Kohara Dōjō Calligraphy Museum in Sapporo, for sending me high-quality illustrations of many calligraphic works, Mr Watanabe Fumiyuki, Senior Curator of the Rai Sanyo Museum in Hiroshima, Dr Kurihara Shigeyuki & Dr Seo Hyunkoo, Researcher of political thought, and one of my best friends Noël Nésanson, who loved Japan, helped me collect archival material for this article and sadly passed away at the end of January 2021.



Publication

Self-published, Highland Park, IL U.S.A., 2021

Softcover with 'French-flap' ('double-gate fold') design,

glue binding, 150 gsm New-G matte acid-free pages,

30.5 x 22.8 x 3.0 cm, 392 pages, bibliography, glossary,

index, 141 colour and b/w figures and four unnumbered

colour photos, 165 colour catalogue illustrations.

Edited by Julia Meech and Jane Oliver. Foreword by

Donald Jenkins. ISBN 978-0-578-80411-8. Edition: 600.

Sixty Years with Japanese Prints

H. George Mann

On June 7, 1961, while visiting an art and artefacts shop run by Nagatani Toshizō (1905–94) in Chicago, George Mann purchased his first Japanese print for \$100, an impression of Utagawa Hiroshige's *Meguro drum bridge and sunset hill* (*Meguro taikobashi yūhi no oka*, 4/1857). In good condition and with 'intense' colour, the print showed, as Mann describes it (p. 20): "... a placid scene of travelers in their own private worlds crossing a bridge in heavy snow.... I was hooked". So began a lifelong adventure in the pursuit and appreciation of some of the most remarkable colour prints of the ukiyo-e school.

Before the publication of the present volume, the most complete display of the Mann collection was in a show at the Ota Memorial Museum of Art, Tokyo in 1994 when 141 prints were exhibited and illustrated in an accompanying catalogue.¹ Nearly three decades later, the autobiographical *Sixty years with Japanese prints* expands upon this idea by presenting 165 works preceded by an informative and well-illustrated chronicle of a disciplined collector who succeeded in building a fine assemblage of ukiyo-e along the lines of the pioneering American and European collectors. Indeed, Mann mentions the influences of more than twenty such figures from whom one or more prints ultimately entered his collection, such as Alexis Rouart (1839–1911), Charles Haviland (1839–1921), Henri Vever (1854–1942), Pierre Barboutau (1862–1916), Adolphe Stoclet (1871–1949), Ernest Le Vée (1874–1951), Louis Ledoux (1880–1948), Edwin Grabhorn (1889–1968), Otto Riese (1894–1977), Theodor Scheiwe (1897–1983), Richard P. Gale (1900–1973), Hans Popper (1904–1971), and Werner Schindler (1905–1986).

The Mann collection, which totals 184 prints, descends in kind from these and other landmark early private collections of ukiyo-e. It is characterised by a determined focus on master print designers active in Edo from the late 17th to the end of the 18th centuries. Most nineteenth-century print artists are absent, except for some landscapes by Katsushika Hokusai and nature prints and landscapes by Utagawa Hiroshige. Otherwise, the misconstrued 'decadents' of the 1810s–1860s, such as Kikugawa Eizan, Keisei Eisen, Utagawa Kunisada, and Utagawa Kuniyoshi, as well as the Meiji-period masters Toyohara Kunichika, Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, and Kobayashi Kiyochika, among others, were



2.
Ryūkōsai Jokei. *Ichikawa Danzō IV* (no. 159).



3.
Tōshūsai Sharaku.
Ichikawa Ebizō as Takamura Sadanoshin, 5/1794 (no. 80).

either rejected by most of these pioneering collectors, or acquired in small numbers, as they were by Mann (two by Kunisada, nos. 97–98, and six by Kuniyoshi, nos. 149–153 plus one not illustrated).

Consequently, there are few surprises regarding the artists found in the collection, although uncharacteristically for such a high-end, mainstream assemblage, Mann acquired fifteen kabuki prints from Osaka, a genre typically unknown to, or widely scorned by, most of his predecessors. Indeed, the inclusion of twelve Osaka masterworks in *Sixty years* is to be applauded, for they are deserving of greater connoisseurial and curatorial appreciation. Given this context, the impressive feat of acquiring six exceedingly rare designs by Ryūkōsai Jokei (act. c. 1776–1811; nos. 154–159) should be considered a distinctly open-minded achievement for a collector who otherwise specialised in the standard Edo print designers.

Mann finds Ryūkōsai's works "fascinating — the faces are so individual and expressive, like Sharaku's dramatic "large heads"" (p. 35), as in the full-length portrait of *Ichikawa Danzō IV*, c. 1793 (no. 159; ex-Scheiwe; see fig. 2). In fact, some scholars (including Gerstle and Yano, 2009) have concluded that, as Ryūkōsai's actor prints and paintings preceded those of Tōshūsai Sharaku (active 1794–1795), he was a likely influence on the legendary portraitist, thus knocking down claims of *sui generis* for that Edo-based genius.² Incidentally, the first Sharaku entered the collection in 1972 when Mann acquired, from the San Francisco dealer Ray Lewis (1923–2005), one of the most famous actor portraits in ukiyo-e — *Ichikawa Ebizō as Takamura Sadanoshin* from 5/1794 (no. 80; see fig. 3), once owned by Samuel Tuke (1855–1938).



4.
Eishōsai Chōki. *Geisha Mizue and waitress Moto* (no. 78).

Over the years Mann winnowed various prints from the collection that no longer satisfied his evolving connoisseurship and standards of quality. Among the deaccessioned works were around forty of the first sixty prints acquired during the 1960s. Mann followed certain principles in this curatorial process, which he identifies in a section titled, *What I Look for in a Japanese Print* (pp. 123–126). As he puts it, “One develops a personal sense of quality after spending countless hours examining works at museums and auctions, in other collections and in publications. No doubt, I am influenced by what others have chosen to collect and by the views of scholars” (p. 123).

The worthiness of a particular print came down to several factors. The preferred state was nearly always the earliest. Condition played a significant role. Ideally, prints should not be faded, stained, trimmed, rubbed, creased, or fenestrated with insect holes. However, as Mann says, “For me, if the design “sings,” some condition problems can be overlooked”. This was especially true for eighteenth-century prints (the already



5.
Sugimura Jihei. *Lovers*, 1680s (no. 3).

mentioned Sharaku no. 80 is an example). Moreover, rarity was a factor, and so was provenance. Mann writes: “Because each of those [early] collectors is respected as having refined taste, I enjoy tracing provenance through catalogues and other books.... Ledoux’s policies of limiting his collection to two hundred prints [sic, 250]³ and focusing on very rare early prints have influenced me strongly” (p. 125).

Not all of Mann’s decisions to weed out apparently inferior impressions proved to be wise, as he acknowledges: “I do feel I have sold or donated several pieces prematurely by culling the collection from time to time” (p. 126). One lapse in judgment was the selling of an excellent print by Utagawa Toyokuni I depicting the actor Sawamura Sōjūrō III as Ashikaga Yorikuna from 1795 (no. 16). Mann thought it was missing some colour (i.e., unprinted) in certain parts of the design. Thus, the Toyokuni went from Hans Popper to George Mann to Anne van Biema to the Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

The first section of *Sixty years* (pp. 14–153) presents the author’s reminiscences as a print

collector. Detailed and personal, it reads like the growing number of profiles featuring Asian art collectors and dealers published in the journal *Impressions* (Japanese Art Society of America, New York) over the last two decades. This theme was first taken up in earnest by that journal with issue no. 25 in 2003, one devoted entirely to collecting and collectors.⁴ That same issue included an article titled *Passionate pursuit: my adventures in ukiyo-e* by George Mann (pp. 77–91).⁵

Among the many anecdotes in Mann's memoir section, there is one called the *Ongoing story of the 'large fish'* (pp. 80–85, 94–97, 290–311; illust. 86, cat. nos. 118.1–14). A group of ten exquisitely printed *surimono* (privately issued) sheets by Hiroshige, commissioned by an Edo poetry circle to commemorate a verse competition, became available privately from the collection of Willard Gidwitz (1908–1981). The deluxe edition of this untitled album is known as *Every variety of fish* (*Uozukushi*, early 1830s), with each *ōban* (large size) sheet depicting fish or other sea life, and each inscribed with poems. Mann was able to acquire the ten prints in 1980 but then realised months later that missing from the set were an additional four sheets printed with poems but no images. These he was able to track down in 1985 at the Red Lantern Shop in Kyoto when, to his surprise, the proprietor and previous owner of the 'fish album' Kondo Sentarō (1933–1985), who had sold the other ten images to Gidwitz, gifted the poetry sheets to Mann.

As is true for virtually every frequent competitor in the auction world, Mann had his share of disappointments. He was, for instance, the underbidder for some lots at the famed Henri Vever sale at Sotheby's, London in 1974. He remembers the auction as a low point in his collecting, when he was outbid and

felt crushed "to be left out of every transaction after so much anticipation, forethought and planning", so much so that his "failure to buy Utamaro's *Reflective Love* (*Mono omou koi*), Shunei's portrait of Bandō Hikosaburō III and several other iconic designs hurts to this day" (p. 59).

Auctions can be heart-thumping affairs. One anecdote in this regard concerns the third Le Vée sale, Paris, in November 1981, which offered what Mann calls "absolutely the most riveting print I had ever seen". This was an Eishōsai Chōki portrait of a young beauty applying lip rouge as she gazes into a mirror (illust. 81, p. 90). When the bidding went inexorably past the estimated price, Mann continued bidding beyond his planned limit (he writes that his "shins were perspiring" p. 92), reaching the point where "passion often replaces reason" (p. 92). He was, however, ultimately outpaced by a billionaire Japanese real estate magnate named Shino Rinji (1909–1996), with the final bid soaring ten times beyond the estimate to the applause of the auction audience. Sadly, when Shino resold the unique print at auction years later, it was a ghost of its former self, having faded after years of display in bright light. Thankfully, another fine Chōki became available at auction (Christie's, New York) fifteen years later in November 1996, when Mann acquired what he says might be his 'first among equals' of all the masterpieces in his collection — a Chōki double portrait of the *Geisha Mizue and waitress Moto at the Yoshidaya* (illust. 104, no. 78; see fig. 4), which was in exemplary condition (and remains so a quarter of a century later).

As every long-term collector knows, serendipity will occasionally reward the seeker of treasures. In 1982 at Christie's, New York, Mann was bidding on a Sharaku 'large head'

of the actor Sakata Hangorō III (illustr. 49, no. 82) from the collection of Sidney Ward (1929–1996). It came down to Mann and a competing telephone bidder who happened to be calling from Mexico. Suddenly, the bidding stopped at a price well below what Mann had anticipated, crowning him the winner. He later learned that the phone line to Mexico had inexplicably gone dead!

A few years after the Vever auction, Mann acquired one of his collection's finest seventeenth-century works, a portrayal of lovers by Sugimura Jihei from the 1680s (pp. 160–161; no. 3; see fig. 5). A hand-coloured *sumizuri-e* (works printed in black ink) from an album of otherwise explicit erotica (*shunga*), it had gone from the collection of Louis Black (1905–1958) to John Gaines (1928–2005), who consigned it to Sotheby's, New York for its May 24, 1979, auction.

Mann confesses to what he calls his occasional 'reluctance to step up' (p. 62). Among the prints that he declined to pursue over the years, for reasons of less-than-ideal condition or too high a price, there was one notable (and nagging) example — Katsushika Hokusai's iconic 'Red Fuji' (*Fine wind, clear morning, Gaifū kaisei*), circa 1830–1832. It is the Hokusai design most prized in Japan, even more so than the 'Great Wave' (*Under the wave off Kanagawa, Kanagawa oki nami ura*), which is preferred in the West. At the first auction he ever attended, the Paolino Gerli (1890–1982) sale at Sotheby's, New York, in 1971, Mann passed on an impression that had a faint centrefold (bought by John Gaines; p. 69), thinking he could buy another without a fold that he had just seen in the inventory of a print dealer (p. 43). However, after the Gerli impression sold for more than the estimate, the dealer raised his price and Mann decided not to buy that one as well.



'Red Fuji' continued to elude Mann while its market value skyrocketed. On another occasion, in 1977, he purchased an "impeccably credentialed [but still] questionable Kaigetsudō ... for a hefty price" (p. 79). This work turned out to be a spurious Kaigetsudō print that had fooled several ukiyo-e experts. At the same sale, he passed on works by Kiyomasu, Utamaro and Sharaku, as well as a "fine Red Fuji" (p. 79). An impression of 'Red Fuji' never did enter the Mann collection. However, Hokusai's *Shower below the summit* (*Sanka hakuu*, no. 102; see fig. 6) was acquired in 1983 and the iconic 'Great Wave' entered the collection in 1993 (no. 101).

The second section of *Sixty years*, the catalogue (pp. 154–361), features 165 prints identified by artist, subject or print title, series title (if any), date, artist signature, publisher (if known), medium and size, provenance, and publishing and exhibition histories (if applicable). There are twenty-seven prints from the early period (spanning c. 1680–c. 1760). One of great charm is the *Flower vendor* by Okumura Masanobu, c. mid-1740s from the H. Takano collection in Tokyo (no. 12; see fig. 7).

6.

Katsushika Hokusai.

Shower below the summit

(*Sanka hakuu*, no. 102).

Artists of the Katsukawa actor-print school are well represented (nos. 43–61) in the collection. However, there are only three prints by Torii Kiyonaga (62–64), who is usually a favourite in such compilations. Kitagawa Utamaro fares better with eight designs (65–72). Other masters of the period include Chōbunsai Eishi, Chōkōsai Eiri (see fig. 1), Eishōsai Chōki, Utagawa Toyokuni I and Utagawa Kunimasa, as well as four splendid *ōkubi-e* (large head pictures) by Tōshūsai Sharaku. Most of the remaining works are by Katsushika Hokusai (nos. 99–115) and Utagawa Hiroshige (nos. 118–148).

One hundred of the featured works include commentaries, ranging from a single sentence to several paragraphs. Some have transliterations, romaji and English translations of Japanese inscriptions or poems. These texts seem pretty much in order, although for the last catalogued print (no. 165) by the Osaka artist Shunbaisai Hokuei (active c. 1/1828–10/1836), the back-street murder scene is said to show “bloody tracks in the snow” (based on Meech and Oliver, *Designed for pleasure*, p. 205).⁶ This is incorrect, as the play is a drama for the summer season and the tracks are muddy footprints, not ‘bloody tracks’. Such an oversight brings into focus the essential character of *Sixty years* — it is more a work of personal connoisseurship than new scholarship.

On the whole, the photography serves its purpose, although some of the illustrations are slightly to moderately overexposed. As the Mann collection is notable for the excellent condition of so many of its prints, it would have fared better in this regard had the images been granted more individualised editing. It is at the upper end of the tonal-value range where particular illustrations suffer most, sometimes washing out details, especially in



7.
Okumura Masunobu.
Flower Vendor, mid-1740s
(no. 12).

the faces, as in the portrait of the courtesan Konosato of the Takeya, c. 1794 (no. 73; ex-Ledoux).

Speaking of quality, Mann, as the caretaker of an exceptional collection, has been rigorous in maintaining archival storage and display conditions. Since the 1960s, all prints have been mounted in acid-free mats and, when loaned for exhibition, lighting has been maintained at controlled levels for periods of rarely more than six weeks. Over the years, Mann has engaged paper conservators to “repair tears, remove stains, fill in wormholes and other paper losses” (p. 126).

Mann’s valuing of condition as a primary criterion for collecting does raise the question of what was missed among rejected ‘condition-compromised’ prints that nevertheless had art-historical value. Even so, a broad survey of scholarly value was not the goal of this collector. As already noted, Mann followed the ‘Ledoux principle’ whereby the



size of the holdings was constrained while the average quality was improved through culling and acquisition. Ledoux's collection, for example, "remained of the same size [250] for more than twenty years... Whenever one print has been added another has been taken out" (Ledoux, 1942).⁷

IN CONCLUSION

What can we assert about the particular achievement of George Mann and his collection? For context, we might cite the auction of prints owned by the author, poet, playwright, and collector Arthur Davison Ficke (1883–1945) held on February 10–11, 1920 at the American Art Galleries in New York. Ficke is best known in ukiyo-e circles for his *Chats on Japanese Prints*, 1915 (translated into Japanese, 1919). Frederick W. Gookin (1853–1936) of Chicago, the foremost American ukiyo-e connoisseur of the period, wrote introductory notes for the Ficke auction catalogue, declaring, "The growing scarcity [of Japanese



prints] has now reached the stage where few dealers have stocks of any great magnitude, and it seems likely that henceforth prints of the most distinguished quality will seldom be obtainable save through the breaking up of existing collections."⁸

A century later, another Chicagoan, George Mann, has published an account of his six-decade journey collecting and appreciating Japanese prints, many of which were obtained, as Gookin predicted, from dispersals of early collections at auctions or through dealers and private sales. Mann's sophisticated sense of what was worthy of an important and aesthetically elevated collection had an impact from the start, with excellent and rare examples entering the collection early on, such as Katsukawa Shunchō's portrait of *The courtesan Morokoshi of the Echizen-ya* from circa 1794 acquired in June 1964 (no. 61; ex-Maroni; see fig. 8). Thus, a core accomplishment of the Mann collection is the painstaking assemblage of fine and often rare ukiyo-e,

8.

Katsukawa Shunchō. *The courtesan Morokoshi of the Echizen-ya*, c. 1794 (no. 61). The earliest 'large head' (ōkubi-e) to enter the Mann collection (1964).

9.

Ishikawa Toyonobu. *Courtesan & attendant*, 1750s (no. 24). One of the last three prints added to the Mann collection.

many of them unequivocal masterpieces.

The previously mentioned issue no. 25 of *Impressions* also provides context, as introduced by Julia Meech: “An important era of collectors and collecting is rapidly fading from memory. With the hope that we might capture some of this history before it is too late, this issue of *Impressions* ... is devoted to collecting and collectors, a fascinating and complex subject”.⁹ The story of the Mann collection, edited by Meech and Jane Oliver, fulfils this aim as a comprehensively described and illustrated memoir. Although not large by the standards of most pioneering aficionados in the halcyon days, the collection is a worthy successor to the legendary early assemblages that helped establish ukiyo-e as a critically acclaimed art form.

Mann’s last acquisitions were three works from the Stoclet sale in 2004: Torii Kiyomasa I (no. 7), Ishikawa Toyonobu (no. 24; see fig. 9), and Torii Kiyohiro (no. 26). Since then, he has loaned selected prints to exhibitions: Freer/Sackler, *Hokusai* in 2006 and 2012; Asia Society and Museum, *Designed for pleasure*, 2008; Tokyo National Museum, *Sharaku*, 2011; Art Institute of Chicago, *Connoisseurship of Japanese prints*, 2012; and Smart Museum of Art, *Awash in color*, 2012–2013. Otherwise, as always, he has shared his treasures with fellow collectors, scholars, and dealers.

To date, around 450 of the 600 copies of *Sixty years with Japanese prints* have been distributed as gifts to universities, museums, libraries, scholars, art dealers, and collectors in the U.S., Japan, Middle East, and Europe, as well as to family and friends of the author. Among these, around fifty institutions have received copies. A limited number of the undistributed copies are available for purchase through an exclusive arrangement at

the following website:

www.collectingjapaneseprints.com/the-bookstore.

All who read this volume will be rewarded by a personal account of the specialised world of collecting Japanese prints, guided by a lofty level of connoisseurship, and acquired long after the heady days of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For George Mann to have assembled such a choice selection of ukiyo-e is a triumph.

John Fiorillo

NOTES

- ¹ Ota Memorial Museum of Art, *Hatsukōkai — Mann korekushon ukiyo-e meihin-ten* (First public showing — exhibition of the Mann collection of ukiyo-e masterpieces), Tokyo 1994.
- ² Gerstle, D. and Yano Akiko, *Ryūkōsai zuroku — Kamigata yakusha nigao-e no reimei* (*Ryūkōsai catalogue — the dawn of Osaka actor-likeness prints*). Mukogawa joshi daigaku kansai bunka kenkyū sentā (Mukogawa Women’s University Kansai Culture Research Centre), Nishinomiya 2009, pp. 42–48; figs. 11–23. Nearly half a century ago, Keyes, R. and Mizushima Keiko, in: *The theatrical world of Osaka prints*, 1973, p. 25, also recognised the plausibility of the Ryūkōsai–Sharaku connection.
- ³ Ledoux, L., *Japanese prints of the primitive period in the collection of Ledoux V. collection*. Weyhe, New York 1942, Foreword.
- ⁴ Meech, J. (ed.), ‘In this issue’, in: *Impressions*, 2003, no. 25, p. 12.
- ⁵ Mann, G. ‘Passionate pursuit: my adventures in ukiyo-e’, in: *Impressions*, 2003, no. 25, pp. 77–91.
- ⁶ Meech, J. and J. Oliver (eds), *Designed for pleasure: the world of Japanese prints and paintings, 1680–1860*. Asia Society and Japanese Art Society of America, New York 2008, pp. 17, 28, 39, 74–75, 77, 127–128, 133–134, 178, 180, 211–213, 221; figs. 3, 11, 18, 40, 48, 51, 53, 95–96.
- ⁷ Ledoux, *op. cit.*, 1942.
- ⁸ Gookin, F. ‘Notes on the sale of the Japanese print collection of Mr. Arthur Davison Ficke’, in: *Rare and valuable Japanese color prints: the private collection of Mr. Arthur Davison Ficke*. American Art Association, New York 1920.
- ⁹ Meech, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 12.

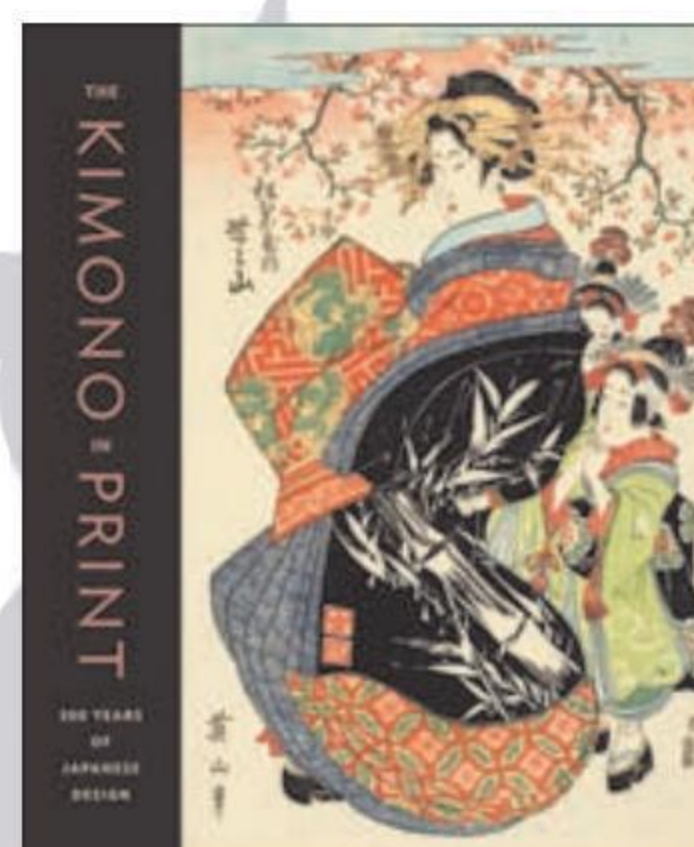


February 2021
Paperback
ISBN: 978-90-04-44850-6
Price: €54 / US\$66

Printed and Painted: The Meiji Art of Ogata Gekkō (1859–1920)

Author: **Amy Newland**

The first English-language publication to offer an in-depth look at the life and career of the Japanese painter and woodblock-print designer Ogata Gekkō. This publication brings together 140 prints and paintings by Gekkō, his students and his contemporaries across five subject areas: history and legend; pictures of beautiful women; the natural world, rural and city views; literature and theatre; and modern wars and modern soldiers.



March 2020
Paperback
ISBN: 978-90-04-42464-7
Price: €45 / US\$49

The Kimono in Print *300 Years of Japanese Design*

Editor: **Vivian Li**

The first publication dedicated to the examination of the kimono as a major source of inspiration and experimentation in Japanese print culture from the widely circulated woodblock prints and illustrated books of the Edo period (1603–1868) to the modern design books of the Meiji period (1868–1912).

For more information and online ordering, visit brill.com.

国際浮世絵学会

INTERNATIONAL UKIYO-E SOCIETY

Membership is open to all individuals and institutions who are interested in Ukiyo-e. Members receive the biannual journal *Ukiyo-e Art* 浮世絵芸術 and bimonthly newsletters. (Such publications are mostly written in Japanese.) Biannual conferences and some study meetings are held in or around Tokyo where members can exchange ideas and share experiences.

Membership Dues Rate

The membership year runs from April 1 to March 31.

Regular Member	¥10,000
Patron	¥30,000
Benefactor	¥100,000
Initial fee (Students are exempt)	¥2,000

International Ukiyo-e Society

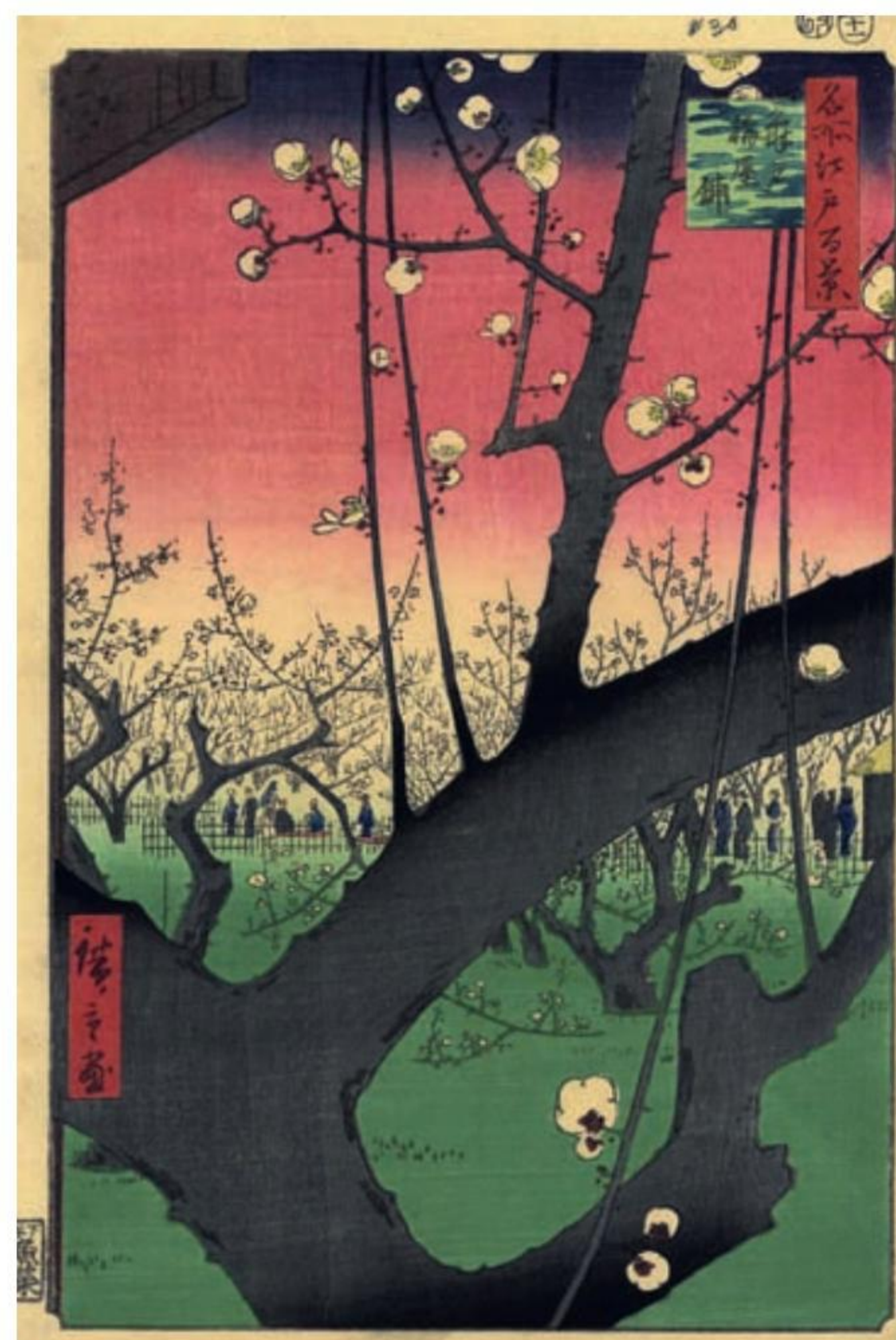
2-12-2-4F Kyobashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-0031, JAPAN

Phone: +81(0)3-6271-0824 Fax: +81(0)3-6271-0834

Email: ukiyo-e@ukiyo-e.gr.jp <http://www.ukiyo-e.gr.jp>

*Back issues of *Ukiyo-e Art* are available.

Please visit our website for more information.



KATSU EARLY MASTERS OF KABUKI PORTRAITURE KAWA

RONIN GALLERY

Bryant Park Place

32 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018

212.688.0188 | RoninGallery.com

Largest Collection of Japanese Prints

for Sale in the United States

Japanese and East Asian Contemporary Art



HARA SHOBŌ
Tokyo, Japan
www.harashobo.com



原書房
JAPANESE PRINTS

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE II

Akasaka Kiribata Uchi no kei (View of Paulownia plantation at Akasaka in rain), from *Meisho Edo hyakkei* (One hundred views of famous places of Edo), 1859

Mail: ukiyoe@harashobo.com / Tel: +81-(0)3-5212-7801

2-3 Kanda Jimbocho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0051 Japan

Open Tue - Sat, 11am-5pm Closed Sun, Mon, Holidays



harashobo



PRINTS &
LIFESTYLE

Hokusai, Katsushika (1760-1849)
Reclining Courtesan Painting
c.1802

Pigment on paper
29.5 x 44.8 cm

Poem by Kyoden, Santo (1761-1816)
Translation by John Carpenter

TOBACCO, WHEN LIT,
BECOMES A CLOUD;

A STRING OF FINE DAYS
TURNS TO RAIN;

UNDER A QUILT,
ATOP A FUTON,

LIFE'S PLEASANT ENCOUNTERS

NEVER LINGER LONG....



COLLECTINGJAPANESEPRINTS.COM



BUY | SELL | LEARN

+1(312)972-2591 | info@CollectingJapanesePrints.com



Hotei

*Japanese prints, paintings,
illustrated books and works of art*



Torii Kotondo (1900-1976)
Keshō, (Make up)
1929

Rapenburg 19
2311 GE Leiden
The Netherlands

Tel. +31-(0)71-5143552
E-mail ukiyoe@xs4all.nl
www.hotei-japanese-prints.com

Please visit our website

